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Vol. 13 - #3 - Issue 75 - April/May 2017

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ABSOLUTE UNDERGROUND

TABLE OF CONTENTS

VICTORIA LOCALS ONLY - SEX DEATH RELIGION PAGE 6

TESTAMENT PAGE 7

VANCOUVER VENGEANCE - OMNISIGHT PAGE 9

CALGARY CARNAGE - HIGHKICKS PAGE 10

SHR-EDMONTON - BLACK MASTIFF PAGE 11

WRETCHED WINNIPEG - PSYCHOTIC GARDENING PAGE 12

RADIO FREE UNIVERSE PAGE 14

INK SLINGERS - SCOTT WEATHERMAN PAGE 15

D.R.I. PAGE 17

THE ISOTOPES PAGE 19

MODIFIED GHOST PREVIEW PAGE 20

WENDY THIRTEEN'S SUBCULTURE PAGE 21

PHIL ANSELMO PAGE 23

NINJASPY PAGE 24

DRAKULAS PAGE 25

CRO-MAGS PAGE 26

JODIE EMERY PAGE 28

BC BUD DEPOT PAGE 29

GREEN CEILING PAGE 30

ABSOLUTE ALBUM REVIEWS PAGE 31

ABSOLUTE FILM REVIEWS PAGE 32

420 MUSIC AND ARTS FESTIVAL PAGE 33

HEMPOLY 101 PAGE 34

SKUNK AND PANDAS SHATTER SHACK PAGE 35

SOMEWHERE TO GO: PUNK VICTORIA PAGE 37

ARTIST PROFILE - CLAYTON HALL PAGE 39

TURBO VIXEN PAGE 40

ABSOLUTE COMIC-GEDDON - ACTION LAB PAGE 41

CALGARY HORROR CON PAGE 42

ABSOLUTE HORROR PAGE 44

SHRED SESSION - BARRIER KULT PAGE 47

BUSINESS PROFILE - 8TH DIMENSION PAGE 50

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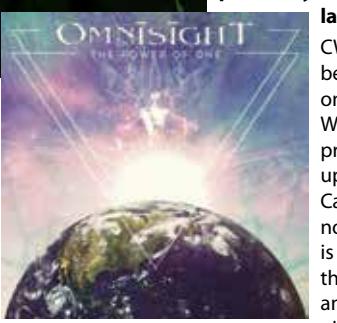
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Omnisight
Interview by Roger the Shrubber



Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you most infamous for?

Chris Warunki: This is Chris (co-founder/drummer) of Omnisight. We're infamous for our world-class musicianship and unique blend of progressive rock and metal.

AU: Give us a brief band history, where are you from, how/when did you form?

CW: How much time do you have? Haha, well believe it or not, Omnisight actually began way back in 1997 after a classified ad in the *The Georgia Straight*. Raj ran the ad looking for a drummer and mentioned influence by Dream Theater, Faith No More, Tool and Soundgarden... so, by recommendation of my current guitarist at the time, I replied to the ad and we got together shortly after. It just clicked between us, the creative chemistry and similar influences were there, so we recruited a bassist and played for many years as a three-piece, then eventually as the solidified four-piece we are today with Dave (bass/vocals) and Blake (guitar). It was tough for us back then, because regular rock bands were scared to share a bill with us, but we also weren't really brutal enough for the metal scene... so we just kinda did our own "omni-thing," which we still do today, but on the next level... or two!

AU: Describe your music for someone who's never heard it before

CW: We pride ourselves on having songs. Meaning that it's not all about the flashy musicianship, but that's certainly there, too. First and foremost, there's melody... memorable choruses and meaningful lyrics that people connect with.

Groove, too... it's gotta have a sexy swagger to it, like vintage Van Halen. Then we'll also throw you the occasional rollercoaster instrumental track ("Heavy Weather," "String Theory," "Hectic," "Fall of the Empire,") with tons of shred guitar and odd time signatures... this is probably why we get the prog tag.

AU: You just released a new EP, *The Power of One*, earlier this year, tell us about it! Do you explore any particular themes or topics?

CW: Yes, we've very pleased with the results all around! Some would call it a "concept album," since the lyrics are mainly about standing up against oppressive rule... against corruption and greed. [There are] geopolitical topics and self-empowerment, too. Just look at the song titles, though "Seven Sisters" is about the seven major oil cartels and the irreparable damage they've

AU: What does 2017 have in store for

done to the earth for profit.
AU: You've mentioned that the title track explores the theme of one person making a difference in the world - can you tell us more about this? Do you really think one person can change anything in our mass media-laden, politically corrupt

landscape?
CW: Yes, it all begins with one person! We have it pretty good up here in Canada, no place is perfect though, and we're observing

things that happen in the world around us in the States and overseas that are causing us concern as human beings. Although at times there's a sense of hopelessness, ultimately if people stand up for what's right, they can initiate a change. There's too much fear mongering going on out there. Mass media just thrives on this stuff! Next time you watch the news do a tally of "good news" vs "bad news"... which do you think comes out on top by a long shot? They say "if it bleeds, it leads," and it's sad but true. It's the dark side of human nature, but ultimately we can make a choice to give in to it or not.

AU: What is your philosophy when it comes to songwriting? Do you have any influences we might find surprising?

CW: Raj does most of the writing initially, as mentioned before we have a lot of the same foundational influences, so him and I have a pretty smooth writing chemistry. He'll bring the ideas in and we'll refine them together, my strength comes with the arrangements and rhythmic input, of course. Although we're rooted in 90s influence mainly, there's a lot of subtle classic rock influence too, by Queen, Def Leppard, The Police, Van Halen, and some more chunky stuff like Meshuggah, too! I'm a huge Cynic fan personally (we got to open for them in 2014), so hopefully that comes through in the drumming.

AU: Will you be touring this year for the new EP? Do you have any videos released or in the works?

CW: Omnisight isn't a touring band. As a session drummer, I've had a lot of experience on the road both nationally and internationally with a wide range of artists, and I know much of a dirge it can be, it can suck a lot of time, energy and money out of a project with mixed results. I think in order for Omnisight to get results touring, we'd have to join a bigger bill as openers or do some larger one-off festivals, but we're not about to do the "drive a van across Canada" BS at this rate! As for videos, we have a wicked new lyric video for "Seven Sisters" and I did a pro shot drum playthrough of "The Power Of One," both on YouTube, check em out!

AU: What does 2017 have in store for

VANCOUVER VENGEANCE

Ron Thal (ex-Guns'n'Roses, Bumblefoot) and Paul Masvidal (Cynic), who I have a photo of wearing an Omnisight t-shirt. It's always nice to win over the greats. Every single fan counts, though!

AU: Do you have any final words for our readers?

CW: Just keep doing what you're doing by reading the zines like this one and supporting your underground/independent local bands - there's no shortage of talent out there and we hope to see you at a gig soon! Bring earplugs, it might get LOUD!

<https://omnisight.bandcamp.com/>

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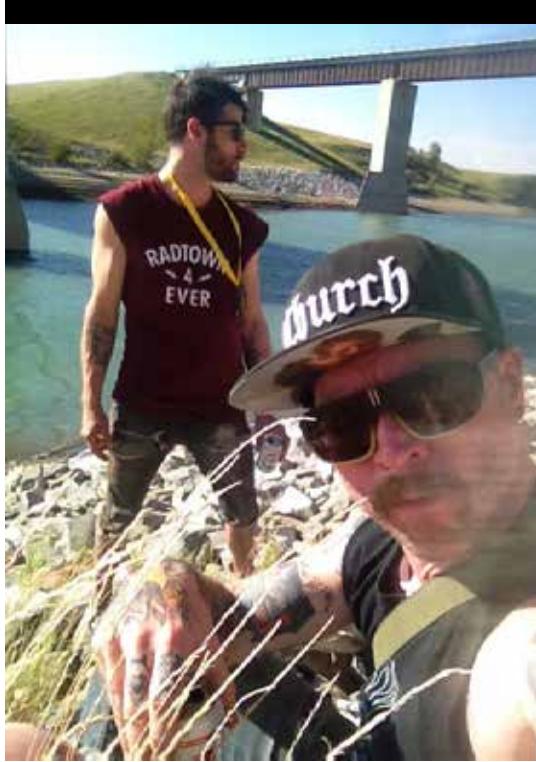
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9



HighKicks

Interview by Roger the Shrubber

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you most infamous for?

Danny Vacon: INFamous. That's like, more than famous, right? This is Danny from HighKicks. We are just a couple nobodies, known for staying up later than everyone else and making questionable decisions.

AU: Can you describe your music for those of us who haven't heard you before? Give us a brief band history?

DV: It's loud and fuzzy. Like if Death From Above weren't sad sissies and partied harder. Matt was

my bartender and I was/am a problem drinker. He lived in his garage/jam hole and sublet his house to some dudes at a profit. Pissed in a bucket. Pretty genius.

AU: What is the HighKicks credo?

DV: Less isn't more. More is more.

AU: You guys are playing 420 Fest in April, what's it all about?

DV: I don't know. We just get in the van and do our thing. Leave everyone a little better off for leaving their house. When people give a shit, it's our duty to make sure it's not in vain.

AU: What does this year have in store for you? Are you recording? Touring?

DV: New album soon. Got some more tracks on the new *Wolfcop* movie. Find love. Sabotage it by accident. Write songs. Play everywhere. Repeat. Same ol', same ol'.

AU: Are you going to be a duo forever? Do people always try tell you that you should add guitars?

DV: Yeah. We get that a lot. Nobody says that to married couples. I like my rock wife. That being said, I AM for hire to play guitar to married couples while they make sweet love.

AU: In a past interview, you've said, "as soon as celebrating isn't cool, then rock and roll is in big trouble." Does that mean you guys truly believe rock and roll is forever? What makes you so sure? Can you guarantee this for us?

DV: You have a HighKicks guarantee on that. And we don't give those out too often. I think if you look into yourself, you already know it's true. What the eff is going to replace rock? Karate? Butt stuff? Everything has rock in it. Even karate and butt stuff. Even if you don't realize it. Like how everything is carbon based. Carbon is the original Sister Rosetta Tharpe.

AU: What's the Calgary music scene looking like right now? Any favourite local groups?

CALGARY CARNAGE



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SAT 13	GUTTER DEMONS / PREYING SAINTS / BLAST TRAIN
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Black Mastiff

Interview by Willow Gamberg

enough time I would without a doubt be back there again with him, Harper and Trevor, but right now we're just working through the songs. The rest will come.

AU: When will it be released? How will it compare to your past albums, what can we expect to hear?

BY: We don't have a timeline right now, we just knew we had start, for now we'll just bring songs with us to shows and see how much fun we can have with them.

AU: You're doing a few tour dates this spring, including a spot at the first annual 420 Fest... what's that all about?

BY: I'm really excited to be apart of 420 fest for their first year, it's going to be fun, like a heavy groove riff melting pot.

AU: What else does this year have in store for Black Mastiff? Do you guys have any other tours planned for summer?

BY: We're going to have a busy year is all we can say. More show announcements are coming and between that, and working on the new record we'll be swamped, which is awesome.

AU: Your drummer, Allan, is located in Vancouver... how do you guys jam and write music? Do you have to meet up and jam or do you use the wonder of the internet?

BY: Allan being in Vancouver sucks... but we love him, so we're making it work. Some of us are even learning the internet.

AU: You recently announced a partnership with New Ground Agency, though I understand you've been working together for a while - what's it like to have an agent?

BY: We had about a year without a booking agent, and it was shitty to have one and then lose one, we already had a relationship with JFK and it was pretty natural, so now it's official. New Ground Agency works hard, so we're happy.

AU: You guys played Vancouver recently with Bad Guys, at Studio Vostok, which was

an amazing show. Sadly, Vostok has now closed its doors
- what role do you think underground venues like that play in the Canadian heavy music scene?

BY: I'm pretty sad to see it go. People don't generally realize how hard it is to keep these places like Vostok going, but a cool thing about Vancouver is that you know before long there will be a new place. There is always something cooking in that town.

AU: What does the future hold for Black Mastiff? Any long-term goals as a band?

BY: We're actually cat people.
facebook.com/pg/officialblackmastiff
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Psychotic Gardening

Interview by Willow Gamberg

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you most infamous for?

Psychotic Gardening: At the moment, you're talking to Chuck, Matt and John from the band Psychotic Gardening. We're known for playing heavy doom and death metal, and we've been around for a while.

AU: Give us a brief band history. How would you describe your sound to anyone who hasn't heard it before?

PG: The band originally started off with two singers as a recording project. At one point, we recruited a full band, including a keyboard player. A few years later, our keyboard player took an opportunity to play music professionally overseas. We became a five-piece from that point on. Two years ago, we parted ways with the lead guitar player and the other vocalist, so John Duke (bass player), Matt Penner (drummer) and Chuck Labossiere (vocalist/guitar player) formed a new band called VOTOV while maintaining PG. We've recently acquired a new lead guitar player and

a new keyboard player, who will also take on the second vocal duty. Psychotic Gardening is doom metal, but we also play fast more classic-style death metal. We do like to keep things more simple, so the average listener can enjoy the grooves and riffs. Often, we use different types of notes to create different sounds, like the ones which were inspired by Piggy. We call those "Voivod chords." We also like to play our music tight, that is very important to us.

AU: Tell us about the upcoming Shredmonton Conference, what's it all about?

PG: Shredmonton is going to be fun! It's going to be cool to play with so many good bands. Huge fest with tons of bands, should be killer!

AU: Are there any acts that you're particularly looking forward to catching?

PG: We are looking forward to seeing Bleed, Eye of Horus, and Krepitus.

AU: Your last album release was several years ago now, when will we hear new music from

Psychotic Gardening

Psychotic Gardening?
Will you continue to release your albums independently?

PG: Yes it was a few years ago because of the member changes. Now that we got the two new guys, we can write some new material and will be releasing both bands' material at the same time. The only way we would sign to a label is if the deal was decent, and worthwhile. I'm not interested in giving away all my hard work for a bag of peanuts and a huge debt to pay. Nowadays anybody can just do it all themselves if they apply themselves.

AU: Tell us about your songwriting process. Do the long bleak Manitoban winters have anything to do with the hopelessness of your music?

PG: The crap Manitoba weather certainly contributes, but ultimately it's world events and human stupidity that inspire me. The music is written first then the lyrics are applied to where they fit naturally. If it's difficult to sing and play, I will stubbornly learn to do it because if it's meant to be, it's meant to be.

AU: Tell us about the upcoming Shredmonton Conference, what's it all about?

PG: Shredmonton is going to be fun! It's going to be cool to play with so many good bands. Huge fest with tons of bands, should be killer!

AU: Are there any particular themes or topics your newer songs explore?

PG: All my vocal themes deal with the same topics. (War, corruption, social engineering, media manipulation, human ignorance, etc) I'm not interested in fictional gore and other unrealistic topics. There are countless other bands to take care of that.

AU: Are there any acts that you're particularly looking forward to catching?

PG: We are looking forward to seeing Bleed, Eye of Horus, and Krepitus.

AU: Your last album release was several years ago now, when will we hear new music from

PG: Hmmm, something people don't know about PG... Our drummer's name is Matt Penner. Ha!

We joke about it but in reality, it seems like some people overlook the talent and value of a wicked drummer. He's had people approach him telling him to check out PG, and he's in the bloody band!

AU: Any final words for readers?

PG: Thanks to all who still support metal by attending our shows and buying our music and merch. Thanks for the interview, cheers!

psychoticgardening.bandcamp.com

PHOTO CREDIT: Amy Lee Zinn

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Radio Free Universe

Make Rock Great Again

Interview by AU Editorial

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to today and what are you best known for?

George Panagopoulos: George, best known for singing and producing.

AU: What is your band Radio Free Universe all about?

GP: Like the name implies, Radio Free Europe was a radio station that started in the war, broadcasting free press to occupied territories. They still do this today. RFU is about that, only with music. We live in a world of genres coated so thick we try to identify ourselves musically like a pair of pants. Music isn't style but style follows music. Music is the liberating force that gives people their own independent identity and allows people the right to think and listen to

whatever we want.

AU: Where are you guys from? What's the scene like there?

GP: Hamilton. It's the best rock city in North America, although you have to be amazing to get any attention here as a rock band.

AU: Who else is in the band, anyone from any previous bands of note?

GP: I was in King Clancy. The rest of the band are veterans of the Hamilton scene, they all played in many bands before finally getting here. Most importantly, they are my very dear friends.

AU: How would you describe your sound to someone who hasn't heard you yet?

GP: It's free. We believe that songs have their own ego and that they should be able to be what they want to be. That takes us across the spectrum. If you listen to the record, it gives no fucks about genre, yet you know it's us. Working this way, we've been able to make music that we like to play and listen to.

AU: What can one expect from your live show?

GP: Yes! We're planning a North American tour in

Hansom Jeff

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GP: It's liberating and sonic for me. A few reviews are out, they are pretty gracious. Something about it being the reason we all got into music to begin with. We don't try to put on a show. So everyone is very honest. The songs sound simple but they are extremely challenging to perform on every instrument. When you perform some like that and you happen to love it, something distinct happens. It's like we all turn into superheroes or something mythical, ominous and inspired.

AU: Tell us about your new album, *Casa Del Diablo*.

GP: It's clearly my favourite album to date. I've produced a lot of records in my time.

Producing my own projects has always been challenging. When Glen Robinson came into the picture, it was awesome for us. He did the first four songs. There was a very clear connection between him and me. I mean, he not only got me, he helped me get the fundamentals I needed to actually produce the rest of the album.

After the first session, I started an amazing facility in Hamilton, now run by Jetpack (our label). It's a truly incredible space like the studios of old, with all the modern amenities, too. The philosophy is to make records with the same time allowed on the great records of the past.

AU: Who else is on your record label Jetpack Records?

GP: This is a new label with a new philosophy. There are four other acts Jetpack is working with, but we're the first official act out of the gate.

AU: Any upcoming touring plans?

GP: Yes! We're planning a North American tour in



the fall, and a lot of local touring to support the radio campaign.

AU: How does Radio Free Universe plan to make rock great again?

GP: These songs wanted to exist. They are in the ether. Somewhere between what we know about the universe and what we don't know lives creativity. We find when we don't stop it and instead serve it, something very strange happens. Maybe it's magic, maybe it's science, for the most part I don't care. What I do know is that I

absolutely love what comes out of those moments.

Rock started to suffer when people tried. They tried to be different or they tried to sound like something familiar.

The music knows what it wants you to do. It will spread

to each member at some point. When you listen carefully and you do it, when you can understand who can hear it when you can't, that's when you're making great music.

AU: Final words for Canadian fans?

GP: Please download this album and if you can call your local station and request it, do so. You should do that for any band you love.

www.facebook.com/radiofreeuniverse



Scott Weatherman

Interview by Roger the Shrubber

Absolute

Underground: Who are we talking with and what are you most infamous for?

Scott Weatherman: My name is Scott Weatherman and I am known for my dark artwork, realism and creative designs.

AU: How long have you been tattooing and how did you get started?

SW: A friend of mine saw my drawings and asked if I would tattoo a peace sign symbol on them. I agreed, and once I had done that, I loved it. I was 18 at the time and I've been tattooing ever since, which makes it about 20 years of tattooing now... Wow, 20 years flies by!

AU: What style(s) do

you specialize in?
SW: I specialize in black and grey dark art, realism, portraits and custom work.

AU: What shop do you work out of?

What makes your shop special?

SW: I work at Evil By Needle in Surrey, British Columbia. The atmosphere is friendly and the other artists promote and encourage each other.

AU: Are there any tattoos or scenarios that you'd absolutely refuse to work on?

SW: I refuse to tattoo young people on their faces, usually most of them will regret doing it within no time, so I'd rather not do something they will probably grow to hate.

AU: Does most of your work tend toward the side of good or evil? What inspires your art?

SW: My art is all over the place, but usually it tends to be on the darker side of things; even the nicer things tend to have a hard edge to them. A lot of my inspiration comes from horror movies, other tattooists and artwork. I spend a lot of time looking at dark art and other tattooists who are doing amazing things.

AU: Where can we find more information, do you have a website?

Social media?

SW: I have my Instagram page @ scott_w_tattoos, and I also have my Facebook page, @scott_w_tattoos, for now.

AU: What should we know about you that we don't already?

SW: A few years ago, I hit a wall with art and tattooing. I just stopped, and what turned it around, oddly enough, was a fortune cookie that said,

"Don't give up on your childhood dreams."

Haha, a fuckin' fortune cookie! Which was one hundred percent true. Ever since I was little, all I wanted to be

was an artist. Why the



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experience? What's playing in the shop while you work?

SW: We play all types of music to please everyone who works or comes in the shop but myself, I usually will be playing death metal or heavy metal mostly.

AU: Are there any tattoos or scenarios that you'd absolutely refuse to work on?

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on Stomp and Red Scare Records. They recently slid through Victoria BC for their Canadian tour kickoff, and gave us a taste of the new record. I can assure you it's a worthy follow-up to their last LP, *Nuclear Strike Zone* with their witty lyrics, Ramones-style beat, and Evan's silky vocals.

You can check out the new video and preorder their new record through links on their Facebook.

Absolute Underground: Springfield or Albuquerque?

Evan October: Springfield.

AU: What can we expect from your new record?

EO: Smash hit after smash hit.

AU: What is the strangest line up of bands you've ever played with?

EO: Every night with The Real McKenzies

AU: Would you please explain the meaning behind the name of your new record, for those of us who don't understand sports?

EO: 1994 was the player strike year, so the season was halted and there was no world series. As Canadians we would have at least made it to the world series. They were the first in the NL at the time the season was truncated.

AU: Who is your biggest influence that would come as a surprise to us?

EO: Freddy Mercury, Carley Rae

AU: What stadium serves the best hot dog?

EO: You can't beat a Wrigley Field hot dog

AU: Do you have any plans to tour in Japan?

EO: Yeah we do. Japan is a huge baseball town.

AU: Why did you decide to spoof Wayne's World in your new video for the song, "Legend of George Brett"?

EO: That scene is begging to be spoofed for a music video. I can't believe nobody did it before. Like most brilliant ideas, it just appeared.

ISOTOPES

1994 WORLD SERIES CHAMPIONS

AU: What's so great about him anyway?

EO: YouTube: "George Brett shits his pants." We watch that ritualistically on tour. Daily Duststorm can recite the whole thing verbatim.

AU: Are there any plans for collaborating with another artist, like when you did with Blag Dahlia?

EO: Nothing like that on the new record, although the line up is stacked with talented motherfuckers.

AU: Any words of wisdom?

EO: Never answer this question seriously.

theisotopes.bandcamp.com
facebook.com/Isotopes/

The Isotopes Punk Rock Baseball Club

By Esther Wurley

I had the opportunity to catch up with Evan October, the frontman from everyone's favourite baseball-themed punk rock band, The Isotopes, while they were on tour across Canada with The Real McKenzies. He tells us what ball field has the best hot dog, points us in the direction of the funniest YouTube video I've ever watched (seriously, watch the video he mentions below), and gets us excited to hear their new record, *1994 World Series Champions* out April 14th

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Modified Ghost Festival:

Five Undercard Picks

By Michael Luis

From the punishing death metal of Dying Fetus to the mosh-fueled mayhem of the Cro-Mags, the Modified Ghost Festival's 2017 lineup has truly outdone itself. The titular concert promoter has quickly established itself as Vancouver's premier supplier of heavy, repulsive music, and this year's four-day event is sure to occupy the eyes and ears of British Columbia's head-banging contingency. Gone is the last year's frantic schedule that saw festival-goers venue-hop between The Vogue, Astoria, Biltmore, and Rickshaw. Instead, this year's event, taking place May 25-28, offers a streamlined approach: one venue per night, packed to the brim with loads of ripping bands.

Thrash titans Municipal Waste and Razor round out the bill of headliners alongside stoner favourites Candlemass and Red Fang. This is cause for excitement enough, but as any festival veteran will tell you, it's not all about the big names. Some of Modified Ghost's finest acts are among the poster's fine print, the kinds of bands that go on just a bit after doors have opened. Some of them are acts on the ascent while others are stalwarts of the underground. Here are a few favourites.

Youth Decay:

While the band has only been around for a few years, Youth Decay boasts a lineup of western-Canadian punk veterans, featuring current and former members of Comeback Kid, Living With Lions, and Daggermouth. Their 2015 record *The Party's Over* was one of the best of that year, with songs ranging from catchy Warped-Tour pop punk all the way to circle-pit hardcore. Their shows are straight-up fun, which will act as a nice foil to some of the brutal and bleak metal bands in the fest.

Homewrecker:

Ohio's Homewrecker is hard to pin down. The band has worn several different hats, with their releases exploring start-and-stop powerviolence, caffeinated crossover-thrash, and knuckle-dragging death metal. Their latest EP, 2016's *Extinction by Design*, melds all of the styles and more into an ugly yet invigorating blend across its four bleak tracks. Fans of the aforementioned Cro-Mags should take note of these dudes.

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Absolute sub-culture



By wendythirteen

So you're in a local band. I'm going to suggest some band tips.

A while back, I received a really vague email from a dude asking me to book his band. I had to laugh because I had no clue who it was from, even though they claimed to have played a show for me. After hosting hundreds of bands, it really becomes a blur. Since I hosted the band he mentioned he played with many times, I'd have to dig through endless booking sheets to figure out who his band would be. Even then, it could be one of possibly ten bands.

Turn your amps to a reasonable level for sound check. You're not in the jam space or a dingy basement with a basic vocal PA. You might even bring a smile to the usually grumpy sound guy's face. Generally the sound check is just a line check before your set. You are not Aerosmith. This isn't Rogers Arena.

Stay for the whole show. Leaving after your set is just weird and rude.

Multiple spoken word performances before each song? Just no. Riffs, not banter, please.

Time your set to match your allotted time slot. Going over your slot as an opening band makes the whole show run late and in some cases the bands that follow get their time shaved. Then, you will be considered assholes. Opening bands don't have encores. As for covers, maximum one, unless you're a bloody tribute band.

Break down your drum kit off the stage. Learn to do a band gear changeover in 15 minutes. 20 minutes if you're a metal band, since you generally have larger and better gear than your punk brethren.

Yes, I said brethren. I miss the days of mixed bills. I like a wide cross section of cool peeps to hang with at the show. Mixed bills often expose your band to different fans who happen to like heavy music in general. Back in the Cobes days, I did this a lot. Punks were the first ones in the pit moshing to some metal. It's really disappointing how cliquish this city has become again.

And finally, go see other local bands play shows. This is called networking, and supporting the local scene that you are a part of. You increase your chances of getting shows by being around. Handbilling really is a lost art.

I do posters. It's old skool. If you also want to do your own postering, there are etiquette rules. Don't throw them up just anywhere. If you glue shit to government property or unauthorized

corporate places, you can get the venue in trouble. If you see a nice poster board, realize that a poster company has paid a rental fee for the privilege to poster there. Hang one in line sure, but don't slather the whole board or cover upcoming shows. Be reasonable. City poles get gutted every Tuesday and are open to everyone. No point postering Monday night, then blaming the poster companies that you don't see your posters.

Next, you've made it to the stage. Show up on time for load in. Bring your gear unless you've made arrangements to share gear. Don't be trying to borrow shit at the show or messaging me the day of the show for gear share contacts or the imaginary house kit and backline possibilities.

Check in with the door person or promoter. Make sure you know when your slot is and for how long you'll be playing. You could also reach out well before the show for that information.

Make sure your band is on the same page and aware of when the gig is. I had a band have to switch slots the other night because their guitarist thought the gig was the next day and was snoozing when the sound guy insisted the band should reach out to him 20 minutes before their designated set time.

Turn your amps to a reasonable level for sound check. You're not in the jam space or a dingy basement with a basic vocal PA. You might even bring a smile to the usually grumpy sound guy's face. Generally the sound check is just a line check before your set. You are not Aerosmith. This isn't Rogers Arena.

Stay for the whole show. Leaving after your set is just weird and rude.

Multiple spoken word performances before each song? Just no. Riffs, not banter, please.

Time your set to match your allotted time slot. Going over your slot as an opening band makes the whole show run late and in some cases the bands that follow get their time shaved. Then, you will be considered assholes. Opening bands don't have encores. As for covers, maximum one, unless you're a bloody tribute band.

Break down your drum kit off the stage. Learn to do a band gear changeover in 15 minutes. 20 minutes if you're a metal band, since you generally have larger and better gear than your punk brethren.

Yes, I said brethren. I miss the days of mixed bills. I like a wide cross section of cool peeps to hang with at the show. Mixed bills often expose your band to different fans who happen to like heavy music in general. Back in the Cobes days, I did this a lot. Punks were the first ones in the pit moshing to some metal. It's really disappointing how cliquish this city has become again.

And finally, go see other local bands play shows. This is called networking, and supporting the local scene that you are a part of. You increase your chances of getting shows by being around. Handbilling really is a lost art.

I do posters. It's old skool. If you also want to do your own postering, there are etiquette rules.

Don't throw them up just anywhere. If you glue

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- 8 Deepsounds
- 13 Sweet Grass / Molly's Reach
- 14 Staggers and Jags w/The Civil Dead
- 15 Peach Pyramid
- 19 Friends of foes
- 20 BA Johnston
- 21 wild son
- 22 My Kind of Karma - MKOK
- 22 Middle Coast
- 28 The New Haunts
- 29 Eleven
- 27 Johnny 2 Fingers / A Cult of Knowledge

May

- 2 The Hazytones
- 3 In Bliss
- 5 Aviator Shades
- 6 Timberwolves
- 11 The Sun Pilots
- 12 Speak Easy
- 13 amberwood
- 17 Gutter Deamons
- 19 Deepsounds
- 20 Silence Factory

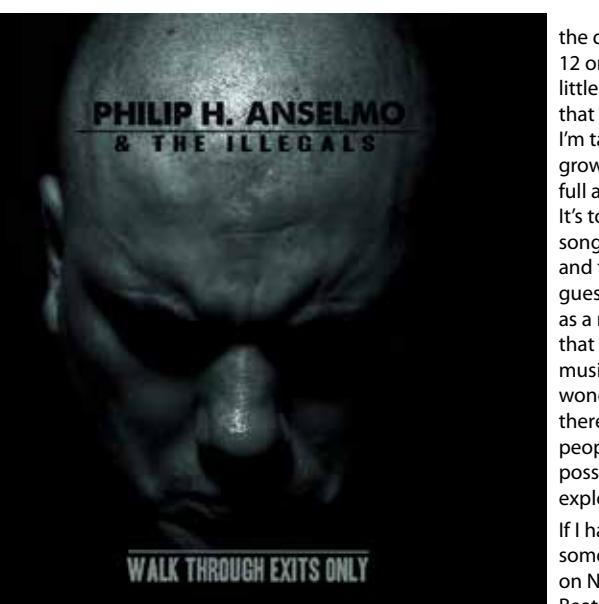
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the damn thing, by the time I was 12 or 13 years old, I had these little haunting, minor key things, that have stuck with me for years. I'm talking about songs that have grown up with me. And I got two full albums of those. It's not metal. It's tough to stick in one box. Each song is different from the next, and that is important for me. I guess it's a way of showing, that as a musician and as a person, that champions investigation of music! Because music is vast and wonderful, and it is there - right there - to explore. I implore people to explore as much as possible. I absolutely 100% say, "I explored."

If

I had to compare it to something, it would be my take on Nick Cave, David Bowie, The Beatles - gosh, I could keep going, but it would confuse you, it doesn't reflect the music exactly. And then, I've got another death metal band, there are members of the band that are anonymous, and we will call it clandestine metal, death metal for sure. It's pretty extreme. It's got an original concept wrapped around it. As a horror movie and true crime fan, as a reader, as a studier, an observer, I think the concept is strong and absurd and I thrive on the absurd - I love the absurd! And that's all the music I've got. Jack, you're gonna get some absurdity out of me and you're gonna have a tough time placing me in one tiny corner, as far as the music spectrum goes.

AU:

AU: It's fantastic to hear you are going in different directions. As far as a singer working in rock, you are difficult to pigeon-hole. You've had many projects.

PA:

PA: It's about to get that much harder. And that is glorious!

AU:

AU: I dig it. This is an odd segway, but let's try it out. When I think of pigeons, I think of Mike Tyson. When I think of Mike Tyson, I think of boxing. And when I think of heavy metal and boxing, I think of Phil Anselmo. So I want to hear what you have to say about boxing! Is UFC taking all the thunder away, where is boxing at, who should we look forward to fighter wise?

PA:

PA: Right now, all the major fighters really are from across the pond. That's why we don't see bigger fights and we presume that UFC is taking its thunder. There could be some truth to it in the States, but I would say it is false worldwide. Boxing is huge in the UK, in Europe. Way bigger. If we look at Floyd Mayweather Jr, he was the hottest ticket in boxing and probably might still be if he came back. Yet is he filling 60,000 seat theaters? Fuck no. Not even close to it. And that is just how it is. That is the differences of passions are. And that shows the strength of the heavyweight division. And it has been said in boxing circles, for years that, "as the heavyweights go, so does boxing." Sorry to say, until the United States starts recognizing Deontay Wilder, the majority of crowds are going to be from UK and Eastern Europe. There you go, "The Boxing Report" with Phillip H. Anselmo."

AU:

AU: It's worth touching on the New Orleans music community, rallying to help out Mike Williams, which is happening early February. Can you speak to that?

PA:

PA: Mike lived with me for a decade and moved out a couple months ago. We are very close, and what's happening is he got a liver transplant which he needed terribly, and just like Mike - right when you think all is over, lost and done - he is coming roaring back. He is beating all the doctors expectations and I'm looking at this as a celebration of his life. Because honestly, I've known Mike since we were teens. And this is a guy who had every card stacked against him. The hand was dealt as a young man was awful, terrible. Yet as we kept aging and maturing and growing older, he was thriving! Against all odds! And on top of it, the dude is, in my opinion a lyrical genius. I think he is an artist

things too. What am I in the mood to listen to, is like what I am in the mood to eat? It depends on the palette of that day. But you know, it's a great question that you ask. I love both of them. What would you choose?

AU:

AU: I would go tacos. The reason being, it is very hard to find good sushi. Sushi is a fresh thing, you need coastal, fresh supply. A time sensitive dish. A flash frozen fish, needs to be ready right now. Limited window. Tacos you got leeway - frozen beef and you can space out. Good sushi is rarer than good tacos.

PA:

PA: That's a damn shame. I got the best of both worlds down here. I'm easy with tacos. We got Taco Bell. I fucking love tacos! [laughs]

AU:

AU: This is something that hasn't been asked!

Finally, something not on the internet already.

PA:

PA: Make a list of all kinds of bizarre questions. I don't mind. I prefer answering the bizarre. I think what you just did, you thrived on the absurd. I gotta give you a gigantic round of applause with my feet. I'm doing it now with sock feet! Call me anytime with more of those questions, call me anytime!

AU:

AU: To end out, last words to the Canadian fans. What are you saying?

PA:

PA: I miss ya and love ya. Canadian fans always so damn loyal! Always imperative to great shows. I remember the Illegals show we played there at the festival and it was a blast. Hope to see you later this year, further on the line. I love Canada. I think beautiful women, place, scene, nature, knowledgeable music fans - VOIVOD! Even Exciter! Razor, Anvil. At one time, Razor had one of the heavier guitar sounds in the 80s. My thrash collection is ridiculous. Blasphemy. Infernal fucking Majesty! "None shall be fire," they were like the Canadian Exhorder or something. They heard Slayer Hell Awaits and went bananas.

AU:

AU: Those are good bananas.

PA:

PA: Not too brown. Not too ripe. Ready to go. Thrive on the absurd, young son.

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Ninjaspy

Interview by Roger the Shrubber

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to and what are you most infamous for?

Joel Parent: Hey it's Joel (guitar/vocals). I'm not sure what I am infamous for. I think to find out if I'm infamous for anything we would need to find a substantial number of people who happen to agree on what that is. That may be difficult...

AU: You're releasing your full-length album *Spüken*, this April, we understand you've made the fans wait quite a while... How long has this album been in the works, and why the wait?

JP: It's been about three years since crowd funding, but the material for this album has been coming together sporadically over ten years. This made the pre-production process a little more arduous. We really took our time getting the songs right and incorporating the visions of the producers (GGGarth and Ben Kaplan). After

that, access to studio time wasn't consistent and schedule juggling added up to a very long wait. Glad to be at the end of the journey!

AU: Tell us about the album itself, what can we expect to hear on it? What will set it apart from past releases?

JP: *Spüken* draws upon many years of writing, so there is a lot of esthetic variance from song to song. But genre-wise, the album is a lot more cohesive than anything we have done before; there are a lot less hard cuts between styles, a lot more actual blending.

AU: Are there any particular themes, topics or inspirations you guys explore with your music?

JP: This album has a definite lean towards themes around personal struggle and growth, and these themes are informed and coloured by martial arts influence from my studies over the years.

AU: You crowd funded this release, correct?

What can you tell us about the experience? Is crowd sourcing the new face of the music industry?

JP: Crowd funding turned out well for us; it was really great to get a sense of who our most diehard supporters are. I think crowd sourcing is just one face of many new ones. There are no rules, really. Artists have all the choice now, but they have to keep working harder and smarter than before.

AU: You recorded in Vancouver with a couple of big names... how was your experience with Garth Richardson?

JP: Garth is a great producer. He always seems to come to a song with the right amount of input and flexibility. He has really brought us around to the new sound you hear on *Spüken*.

AU: You've just released a pretty intense music video for the track "Speak". Tell us about it! Is there a story or an inspiration? That filthy basement looks very familiar...

JP: "Speak" speaks to the long silence between albums for us. It's essentially the title track. It's about a sort of violent catharsis that occurs when you finally let something out that has been held in for a long time. It's both painful and exhilarating. That filthy basement is also those things, haha. That's the former Studio Vostok in Vancouver. I'm missing that place already.

AU: What should we know about Ninjaspy that we don't already?

JP: We all listen to a lot of Steely Dan.

AU: Any final words for our readers?

JP: Hope to see you on the road! Bring appropriate footwear. You can decide what that is...

pretty unlikely. Guess that's why we have been around so long.

AU: What does 2017 hold for you as a band? Any upcoming shows, tours, additional video releases coming up that we should know about?

JP: 2017 is all about getting out there to perform the new material and give people a taste of the new *Ninjaspy*, both live and on tape. We are feeling "seasoned," if I may use that euphemism, haha. But it's a really good thing. We have a new depth now that I am eager to share. We're going to stick to Canada this year, we have a tour planned in April-May from Vancouver to Montreal, with an official *Spüken* release party in Vancouver on June 24th at the Rickshaw Theatre.

AU: Do you have any ultimate goals as a group? Any countries you'd particularly like to visit?

JP: We are open to any opportunity when it comes to choosing where to tour. After 2017, it's going to be all about doing some international jaunts, probably be crossing some large bodies of water. As for ultimate goals, mine would be to just make sure that any music that comes to me for *Ninjaspy* gets made and heard. There may come a day when that flow stops coming, but today is not that day.

AU: What should we know about Ninjaspy that we don't already?

JP: We all listen to a lot of Steely Dan.

AU: Any final words for our readers?

JP: Hope to see you on the road! Bring appropriate footwear. You can decide what that is...

facebook.com/ninjaspy/
ninjaspy.bandcamp.com/

PHOTO CREDIT: Taya Fraser

DRAKULAS

Punk Rock Bowling Preview:

Drakulas

By Ty Stranglehold

Imagine a dystopian future city that somehow resembles New York of the 1970s. Imagine a cesspit of crime ruled by drugs and gang warfare. Now imagine the toughest gang in town playing the catchiest punk rock you've ever heard. Now you're thinking about Drakulas.

Formed in 2015 in Austin, Texas by members of Riverboat Gamblers and Rise Against, Drakulas brought their world vision of turf wars

and cheap highs to the masses with their debut 7" called *Owowowowowow* on Red Scare records. The hook was set, and they unleashed their first full length album *Raw Wave* on Dirtnap Records in 2016.

2017 shows no signs of slowing down for Drakulas. Having kicked the year off with a multi-date Texas tour with Night Birds, opening a string

of SXSW dates for the mighty Rocket From The Crypt, an impending limited edition 12" EP on Victoria BC's own Stiff Hombre Records and a blazing club show at this year's Punk Rock

Bowling festival, it's amazing that gang leader Savage Lord Mic had a minute to answer a few of our questions.

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to today? Your debut album is called *Raw Wave*. What is *Raw Wave*?

Mike Wiebe: This is the Savage Lord Mic. *Raw Wave* is the sound of a bleak summer... *Raw Wave* is the smell of salt produced by a body. *Raw Wave* hits the city and moves all the dirt and filth around. You can't make it clean, but you can move it around.

AU: If Drakulas were to align themselves with one of the gangs in *The Warriors*, which one would it be and why? Who would you go to war with?

MW: They would align as the Drakulas. The Drakulas are the most provocative, the most tactile. Others will pay homage to the Drakulas, kiss our medallions and tattoo marks on their necks. They pay tribute to the Drakulas in deeds and

AU: How does one get jumped into Drakulas?

MW: Breathe deep the *owowowowowow* tattoo the mark upon your neck. There are many roles to play. No test is the same. A body has many different parts while all connected.

AU: Are there plans to gain ground nationwide? Worldwide?

MW: The country will be marked by the Drakulas. Our seed will spread and multiply. So many children. This year alone, Drakulas will come to many towns. We have reached out to emissaries in other parts of the world who beckon us to teach them. Maybe this year, maybe next. The world calls and we listen, but we act on our own accord. On our own time.

AU: VHS or Betamax?

MW: VHS for the consumer, Betamax for the cinephile. The theatres and booths will always contain the true visceral experience.

AU: What happens next?

MW: Indeed. Indeed.

AU: What can people expect from your live show this year at Punk Rock Bowling?

MW: Sweat. Undulation. Euphoria. Muscles tensing and releasing until lactic acid burns like kerosene. Confusion followed by understanding and then revelation.



art. The trains read Drakulas so all may see. Inhale and close your eyes. Open them and look into the neon tubes of light. Hear them buzz. The whisper, "Drakulas."

AU: What happens next?

MW: Indeed. Indeed.

AU: What can people expect from your live show this year at Punk Rock Bowling?

MW: Sweat. Undulation. Euphoria. Muscles tensing and releasing until lactic acid burns like kerosene. Confusion followed by understanding and then revelation.

Drakulas appearing live Sunday, May 28th at Backstage Bar and Billiards, Las Vegas with Giuda, True Rivals and super surprise headliners

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Cro-Mags

Interview with John Joseph
By Stepan Soroka

The Cro-Mags need no introduction. 30 years ago this year, the New York hardcore legends released *The Age of Quarrel*, one of the greatest punk rock albums ever recorded. To celebrate, frontman John Joseph McGowan is hitting the road with a Cro-Mags lineup consisting of original *Age of Quarrel* drummer Max Mackie, bassist Craig Scully and guitarist AJ Novello of fellow NYHC alumni Leeway. We called John Joseph at his home in New York to talk about the album's legacy, his new band Bloodclot, competing in Iron Man, and who holds the title for greatest hardcore band of all time.

Absolute Underground: This upcoming tour is celebrating the 30 year anniversary of the *Age of Quarrel* album. Do you still get the same feeling playing the songs now as you did then?

John Joseph: I mean, if you read the lyrics from the album, a lot of them still apply. If I didn't get the feeling from playing the music then I wouldn't be doing it. You can't fake this kind of stuff. When I wrote those lyrics they were from the heart. They were based on philosophy and a type of spirituality... and then the street aggression stuff... I wasn't singing about a particular political party. I don't think these lyrics are subject to time. I think what was happening then, it keeps going on. So, yeah, I still get the same feeling. As a matter of fact, it's even a little more intense now because of what has happened in the last 30 years. It has become a lot more deceptive, the way that they control the masses. You had Obama for eight years acting like a nice, wonderful guy, who was all over the Middle East, killing innocent people with drone bombs, and bailing out bankers and deporting 3.2 million people, and selling us out to the corporations and big pharma with Obamacare and everything else, and nobody said shit. He did it with a smile, but at least you know what the fuck you're getting with Trump. He's a piece of shit. This guy conned everybody. It's almost like "Sign of the Times." It's relevant today. We weren't writing about Ronald Reagan or whoever the fuck. I tried, when I wrote them lyrics, to really keep it from a universal place. It's a matter of a certain amount of sobriety too, to be aware of things that's happening. It takes constantly being informed. I personally believe that these lyrics are even more relevant now than they were 30 years ago.

AU: Well, that sort of answers my next question. I was going to ask you how the album has stayed relevant. It's still a quintessential punk rock album.

JJ: Yeah, that album was named after something that came out of the Vedic teachings from India. It was called Kali Yuga, the age that we're living in, and that's why I named the album *The Age of Quarrel*. I had just left the Hari Krishna... we started this thing in '81 and it was more about the street. The original lineup with myself, Dave Hahn, Dave Stein... it was more street culture type stuff. When I left the temple where I had been studying philosophy and living as a monk, it definitely took

say, "I wish I could have done this..." Everything happened the way it was supposed to happen. That's the way I look at it.

AU: Can you tell us a bit about your involvement in Iron Man?

JJ: Yeah, I've done eight Iron Mans and a couple of Olympic-distance triathlons. I compete. I just did the World Championships in October of 2016 and raised \$50,000 for a boy with a brain tumour. It's for the Children's Tumour Foundation. I raise money for his family's medical costs. I'm racing in Australia in June and then Kailua in October again. It's just to challenge myself. This year I raced in the 55-59 category. It's just part of what I do. I write books about health. I've got another book coming out, a plant-based cookbook. I've been not eating meat for almost 36 years. So I just do it as a way to challenge myself and show people anything's possible, ya know? A lot of people didn't take care of themselves over the years, especially in the music scene. It's never too late to turn yourself around. I choose to be sober and come at life with the value of

if the time isn't what I expected, I'm not gonna beat myself up over it. You always do your best, but you don't do it because of the result, you do it because you love to do it.

AU: The Cro-Mags and all of the other bands to come out of New York had a very distinct sound that was geographically concentrated around the city. How would you explain such a localized scene getting a worldwide following?

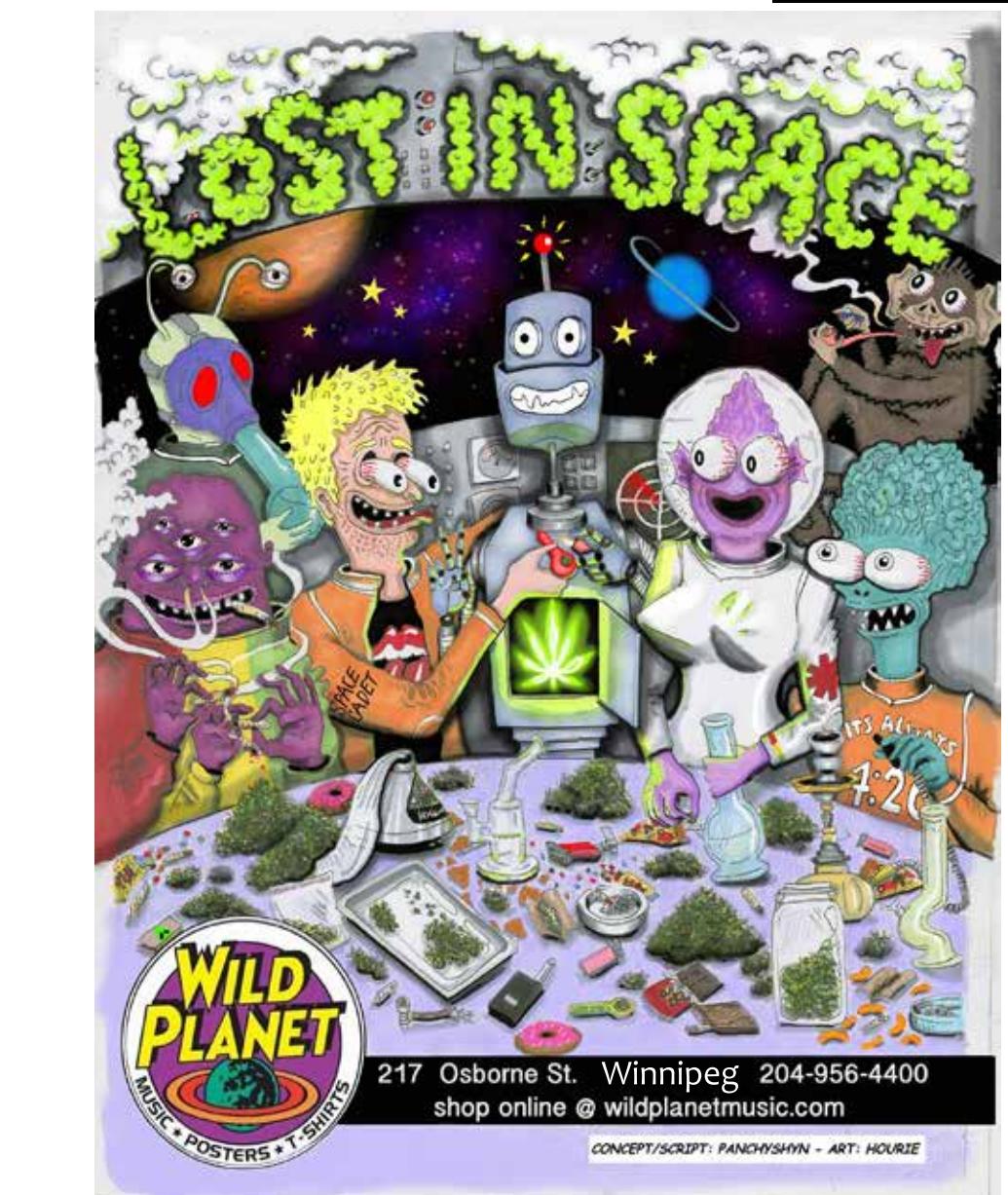
JJ: You know, it's New York, man, and I think a lot of the world looks towards New York. There was primarily three big scenes, I would say, in the US. I mean, Boston was big, but it was never like New York or DC or LA. And it's like, what did you have in DC? Most of those kids were from upper-middle class families. In LA, you got the beach, you got the surf. New York, we were down in the shit. I'm not taking anything away from the West Coast bands. Black Flag, I loved. And Minor Threat and the rest of them. In New York, you had to deal with, you know... I speak for the Cro-Mags because we were living this shit in the burnt out buildings. At least two of us were, anyways. And Mackie was all about the graffiti

on a whole new depth. With writing songs like "It's the Limit," "We Gotta Know," "Seekers of Truth," and "Malfunction," that stuff doesn't go out of fashion. The truth was the truth 1000 years ago and it will be the truth 1000 years from now. That's how you stay relevant. You write stuff dealing on a universal level. Not to compare us with Marley because we don't come close, but I just heard Bob Marley last night, someone was playing it from a car in the street, and I was like "wow." Those lyrics... "until the colour of a man's skin is of no more significance than the colour of his eyes, everywhere is war." Look at today, they're playing the race card, they're race-baiting in America especially. The media is so corrupt in America, it's ridiculous. They just race-bait and play everybody against each other. Donald Trump is serving this exact principle and they put him in office. Make no mistake about it, the same way they put Bush in office, the shadow government which is controlled by the corporations and the bankers, they put Obama in and they put Trump in. As long as they keep everybody divided... it's not just in America either, it's happening all over the world. The last thing that they want is for the people to unite and uprising against the government. I mean, it's not like we are going to defeat them in a revolution, picking up arms against them. The revolution is a state of consciousness. When we elevate ourselves, work on ourselves and expand our consciousness, then we want nothing to do with the system. That's the real revolution. That's what Bob Marley was talking about, that's why he said, "soon we'll find out who is the real revolutionary, and I don't want my people to be tricked by mercenaries." I'm not advocating violence against anybody. I'm advocating for you to unplug yourself from the system, and that's what I would say even when *The Age of Quarrel* lyrics were being written. Unplug yourself from what these guys got goin' on. The minute you don't give a shit about their system and their politics and their crap, all of that stress... I don't even watch that shit. Everyone's flippin' out... that's exactly what they want. You fell right into their plan. That's why I don't subscribe to any political party or any kind of ideology even... this ism, that ism, black power, white power, it's all fucking bullshit.

AU: Including the music, right?

JJ: Oh yeah, absolutely. I just recorded a new album with this new band, Bloodclot. Couple of members of Queens of the Stone Age and Todd Youth who was in Agnostic Front. Even to make that album, it took us a year from when me and Todd started writing it. We just kept going and we didn't quit. That's what happens. You don't sit there worrying. You do things because you love them. Not like some of these Iron Man people...

and the vocals, so... I speak for myself personally, but I went through really being on the streets, as a kid getting locked up and coming back out and living in real dangerous situations. It got to the point, that I talk about in my book, that this drug gang was beating up all the kids. No one would fight these guys, and I did, and they were lookin' to kill me. And no one wanted to be seen or hang out with me, 'cause if you were with me you're gonna get shot. So it's one thing to talk about shit, like some of these bands I see singing about



death. America's biggest export is death. We are arms dealers to the fucking world and that's why we have these wars, because it means money for us. People still think that a bunch of guys with boxcutters fuckin' did 9/11. I mean, that's how fucking stupid some of these people are. They are just programmed by the media. So what we have to do is unplug from all of that bullshit and see how things really work. And in order to do that, you have to work on yourself. "Up in Arms" paints a pretty grim picture of the state of the world, and I think rightfully so. Do you have any hope for the future?

JJ: Yeah, I do. I don't just find the fault in shit, I look for a solution. But what's the solution? Fighting things with politics? That's not gonna solve anything. First of all you need to make people understand the sickness that's out in the world, if you think, karmically, that you're just gonna kill billions of animals every single year in the United States alone, and go overseas and drop bombs on people and fucking kill people and do all this shit, that is not gonna cause karma to every single person here, you're naive. I even say it in the lyrics, "What comes around goes around." That's the way the world works. Even the cover on the album is a US bomb that was dropped in Yemen, illegally, on a wedding party. We bombed them because we believed, through faulty intelligence, that they were terrorists. So they killed all the women and children. It's disgusting what's going on because that's the military industrial complex. That's the crooked politicians, the war contracts. What's our biggest export? It's

out? JJ: The album comes out in July. We were shooting for April/May and then it got pushed back a little bit. I'm excited about that. I'm excited about the Cro-Mags.

AU: That's it. Anything you would like to add?

JJ: The second edition of *Evolution of a Cro-Magnon* is available at the end of this month. It hits stores April 3rd. There are new chapters, there's a new audiobook. A portion of the proceeds goes to this boy's family who has cancer. Check it out and that's about it.

www.cro-mags.com/
www.purepma.com/books

AU: When can we expect the album to come

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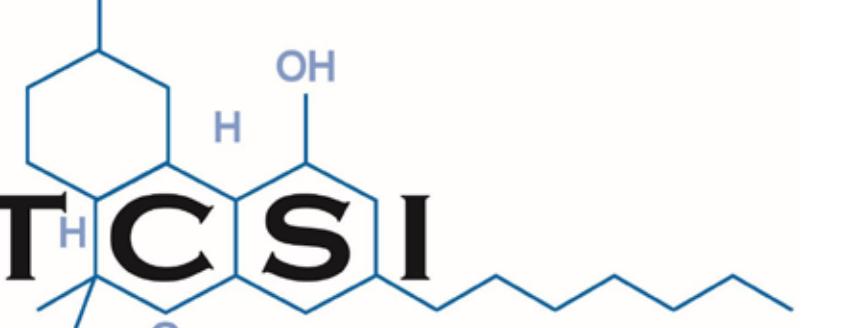
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Jodie Emery

Interview by Ira Hunter

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to today and what are you best known for?

Jodie Emery: My name is Jodie Emery, and I am a well-known marijuana advocate and political activist.

AU: What first got you into activism?

JE: I got into activism when I moved to Vancouver in April 2004 from my hometown Kamloops, BC. I volunteered at Cannabis Culture and the BC Marijuana Party bookstore, going to rallies and running for office. In early 2005 I became assistant editor of *Cannabis Culture* magazine.

AU: What are some of the causes you have been involved in?

JE: My focus is ending prohibition, stopping marijuana arrests, and ending the stigma and discrimination against cannabis and the people who grow, use and sell it.

AU: You have also been involved in politics?

JE: I've run for office with the BC Marijuana Party twice (2005, 2008) and the BC Green Party twice (2009, 2013) as well as seeking a Liberal Party of Canada nomination for Vancouver East in



in 2003 and I moved to Vancouver in 2004.

AU: Tell us the history of the Cannabis Culture Headquarters.

JE: Marc Emery founded the Cannabis Culture Headquarters concept in 1994. It began as HEMP BC, then the BC Marijuana Party bookstore, now Cannabis Culture Headquarters. Numerous media stories and movies cover the history of the building. It's been a landmark in the city for decades, and houses the headshop, vapour lounge, and magazine/Pot TV studios.

AU: Can you please explain what recently happened out East?

JE: Marc and I were arrested for our activism. In April 2016, after a decade of being broke and campaigning during Marc's five years in US prison, I decided to enter into the cannabis retail industry to grow the brand and support victims of prohibition. A cross-country

police raid targeted a number of the shops and people involved, all high-profile activists.

AU: What do you feel was the motivation behind this?

JE: The Liberal Government doesn't like the model of legalization that we were building and sharing with people. They collude with police to raid dispensaries to clear the way for corporate interests (Licensed Producers) to take over the

industry and continue to criminalize the pioneers and original industry.

AU: Have they woken a sleeping dragon?

JE: My activism will step up now that my bail conditions ban me from being involved with Cannabis Culture or dispensaries. A lot more work is needed. Amnesty, pardons, and an apology are what I'm seeking for our people and our plant.

AU: What do you think will happen with the future of the legalization of marijuana?

JE: Legalization will be Prohibition 2.0 and activists will be needed more than ever.

AU: What can people be doing to continue to help this cause?

JE: People need to lobby politicians and get active in elections.

AU: Any 420 plans?

JE: 4/20 goes on as usual, with even more political



messaging than ever. I will be at the Vancouver 4/20 rally, as always. Marc will be in Toronto at their huge protest.

AU: Final words for readers in Canada.

JE: Governments never give freedom to the people. It is always won through the courts and persistent, passionate activism. Do not let your guard down. Raids and arrests continue, and as long as they do, our work is not done.

jodieemery.ca/



BC Bud Depot

Interview by AU Editorial

Absolute Underground: What is the mission statement of your company BC Bud Depot?

Our mission at the BC Bud Depot is to breed and distribute the most desirable cannabis genetics on planet earth. We curate a diverse catalogue of marijuana strains in which each one has a unique appeal. Some are high in certain pleasing terpenes or in CBD, while others are classic strains with notoriously potent THC, and drip with resin. We offer strains for every taste, and are always developing new strains and preserving and enhancing the strengths of our classics. I guess you could say that our mission is to be the best seed source for people who want their medicine to be a cut above.

AU: How did you get started developing your genetics?

It's hard to pinpoint a single point where it all began. I was ignited by a passion for cannabis that has continued from the early 90s on to today. In the early days I always cloned my best plants and shared them around my network of friends, then outbred those selected phenotypes. I shared the seeds, monitored numerous grows around southwestern BC, took notes on every strain and picked the best genetic examples to clone and grow for seed.

I found it more beneficial to be the hub of a network of talented grow masters than to try to do everything myself, because you have to keep your pollen well separated. I would sometimes change my clothes and wash my hair three times in the course of a day as I visited different facilities. But until about 2002, a decade in, it was still a labour of love fueled by a passion for taking the plant to the next level year after year. I did a bit better than breaking even, but not much. That all changed in 2003 when I found myself with a few hundred thousand fresh seeds – some early God Bud, and a lot of obscure but beautiful strains like Blue Buddha and Lasqueti Haze – and I decided to start offering my work to the world. I was amazed by the reception and that encouraged me to quit my day job. Now the breeding and coordination of breeders, as well as the business of sending out BC Bud Depot genetics to the world has become a full-time way of life.

AU: What is the process involved in building an amazing strain?

There's no short cut to the breeder's art. People often assume that you just smash two great strains together and end up with the best of both. Sure, a breeder will often cross great strains, but it's all about knowing, with almost inexpressible intimacy, the finer points of each strain being used, and ideally a lot about the ancestry of each of those strains as well. Each strain tends to express itself differently in different situations, and knowing these tendencies and the range of characteristics of every strain is absolutely key. We now have the added benefits of lab testing, so we know exact cannabinoid and terpene profiles as well.

Anyway, you take this intimate knowledge of each strain and their ancestry, cross the strains, and see what you get. The resultant F1 is, in rare cases, exactly what you're after, but tends to have a lot of genetic variability. The more seeds you can plant and watch grow – and we're talking hundreds or even thousands, to get a good sample size, then the better sense of the results of the cross you'll have. From there it's

just a matter of careful observations, selecting the prize specimens and crossing those. You can literally chase a strain in any number of directions depending on what you're looking for. If it's in the cannabinoid profile, you'll use your nose a lot, take clones from hundreds of individuals while in veg and then grow those out into flower and test samples from whichever turn out to be the prize specimens.

Whichever way you go about it, the essence is this: you expand your gene pool through crossing, and then you carefully, with the hand of an artist, sift out the genes you're not looking for and keep the traits you seek. You pare down those genetics again, crossing like with like or back-crossing into a prize specimen. But there's danger here: in chasing perfection it's easy to strip away vigour and subtle traits that give resilience to disease, for example. So for generation after generation, you make a careful study and alternately expand and contract the gene pool until you find the ideal balance, and then perpetuate that.

One of my big jobs is cultivating the best talent to serve as custodians for our top strains and keeping a careful eye on developments.

AU: What are some of your most famous strains?

Over time it's been The Purps and the BC God Bud. People love them, as each are a gem. Night Nurse took the world by storm a few years ago as well. CBD God, with a 4:1 CBD:THC ratio, has been a big hit, and our 1:1 strain of Harlequin is always in high demand, in fact it's hard to keep that one on the shelf. Tastes have definitely shifted in the last few years towards CBD strains, but our classic stable of hard-hitting indicas will never go out of style, and for the terpene-loving connoisseur we have hybrids and sativas that rank among the world's best weed. Nobody else does it like we do!

AU: What can you tell us about your punk band, Antipolitic?

We're a group of long-time friends who jam and people just kept calling on us to play shows. The only newcomer is our drummer, Brian Thomas who pushed us to a new level in the last couple of years. We play hard-hitting punk with influences ranging from Johnny Cash to the Sex Pistols. Come on out and hear us live at the Bio Cup Canada and Legends Valley Music Festival this summer – you'll have a blast!

AU: 420 Plans?

I will have reps at most 420 events around the

world. It's a day to celebrate!

AU: Where do you see the future of the marijuana industry heading?

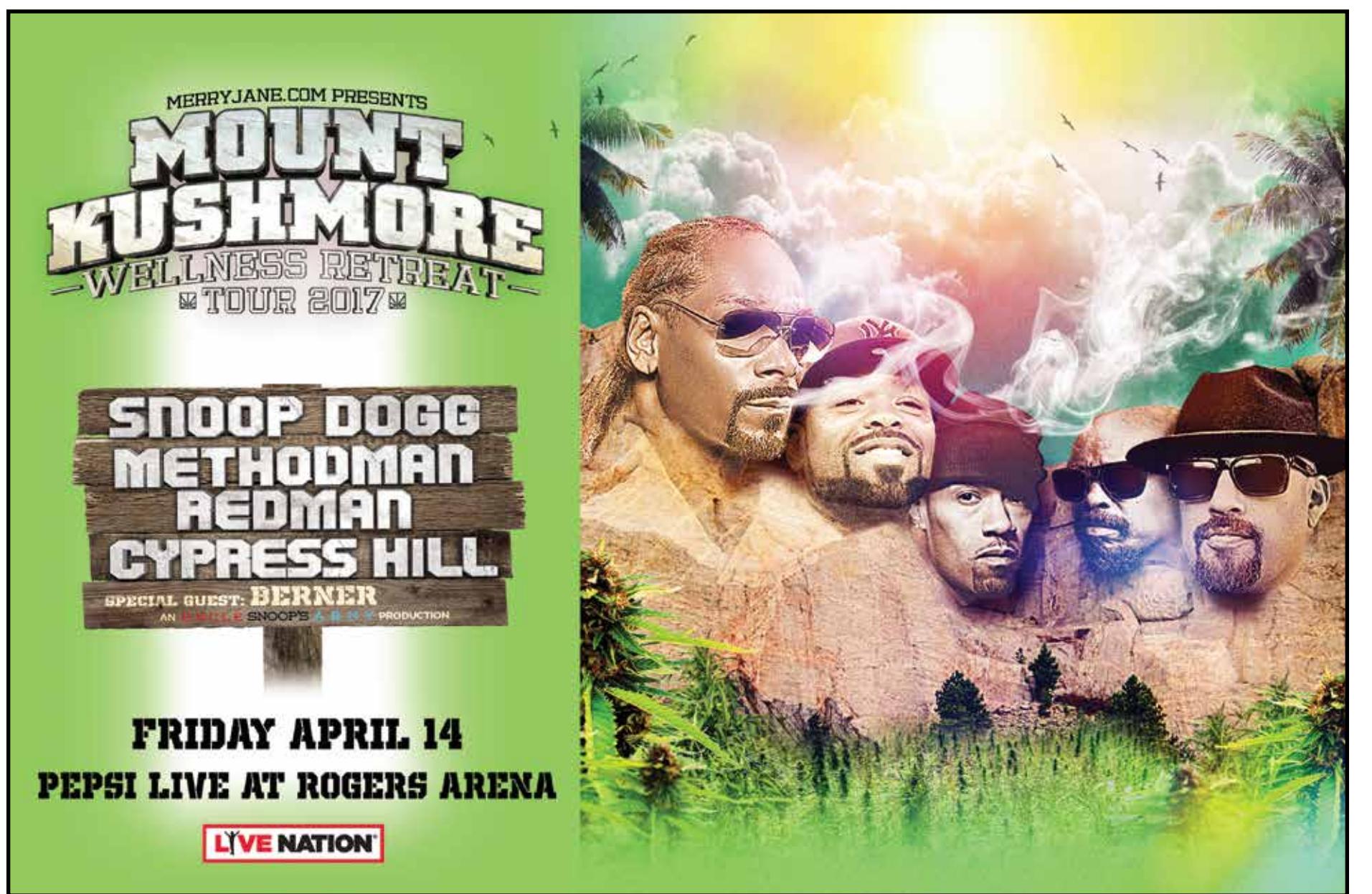
That's a big question. I can tell you where I'd like it to head. We know it's going commercial in a legal sense, so we need to ensure that the industry isn't dominated by a few big names. We need a guaranteed place for craft growers, the same people who have been growing the weed and breeding the strains people love for decades. The corporate world can't come in and make off with our hard work and genetics and the sole privilege of growing the herb we love. I like to think we'll move towards a diversity of small craft growers, like the beer industry's craft brewery scene, and with dispensaries as outlets, places where people can go in open up jar lids and breathe in the aromas rather than having everything sealed off in plastic packaging. We need to make it as organic an industry as possible. It'll go there if we can keep shedding the stigma around cannabis, and we still have a long way to go. In addition we all need the right to grow at least a few dozen plants at home – we need to fight for that right, just like we're allowed to brew beer and grow tomatoes, which doesn't hurt the food or beer industries at all – and let every corner store sell seeds. We need CBD, a non-psychoactive cannabinoid with revolutionary healing properties, in everything from specialized food for children with epilepsy to the prune juice served at seniors' homes.

I think the more we collectively focus on the world we'd like to see, the more likely we are to see it, so let's do this and keep on envisioning this future.

AU: Final words for stoners reading this.

Get planting BC Bud Depot seeds and see you all at the second Annual Bio Cup Canada and Legends Valley Music Festival this year!

www.bcbuddepot.com
www.legendsvaleymusicfestival.com
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Absolute Film Reviews

Blastfighter

88 Films
Quentin Tarantino quoted Blastfighter as, "Lamberto Bava's best film." Starring Michael Sopkiv as Tiger, an ex-cop who, after getting released from prison for murdering his wife's killer, moves back to his home town for a new start on life. Little does he know that the town is teeming with rednecks



that hunt and kill animals and sell the corpses on the black market for huge profits. Tiger just wants to be left alone until one day, when he's out in the back woods, he witnesses the locals kill a mother deer and leave the fawn orphaned. Tiger takes the baby deer with him. But of course tragedy strikes, and the baby is killed in his car while he's in the store buying milk to feed it. Enraged by the death of his new friend, Tiger goes on a rampage and trashes the underground animal business, causing the hunters to fight back. Tiger is then teased and tormented by these hillbillies until his estranged daughter, played by Valentina Forte, is caught in the crossfire and her boyfriend is executed in front of her. Wanting revenge, Tiger takes the fight back to the killers until they rally the entire town against him. On the run, outgunned and outnumbered, Tiger has to use his skills as a cop

- Cody No Teeth

and turns the hunt back on his pursuers. In a mix of *First Blood* and *Deliverance* with a hint of horror, this over-the-top Italian action flick fires on all cylinders. There are a ton of explosions and blood filled squibs as Tiger guns down the townsfolk who unrelentingly track him through the woods. It's almost strange to see this type of film from the scare master Lamberto Bava. Bava is mostly known for his giallo masterpiece *A Blade In The Dark* or his best known films, *Demons 1 & 2*, but *Blastfighter*, even though it's lesser known, isn't any less amazing. The film also stars George Eastman (*Anthropophagus*) as Tigers childhood rival and Michele Soavi (*The Church*) as the boyfriend who meets his untimely demise. Along with the outstanding cast, *Blastfighter* features an amazing 80s electro soundtrack from longtime Fulci collaborator Fabio Frizzi. Bava filmed *Blastfighter* in and around the same area that *Deliverance* was shot and features a cameo from the banjo player who strummed the infamous "Deliver Banjos" song. 88 Films released *Blastfighter* under their "Italian Collection" line, uncut and in HD for the first time in the UK. This release includes the film, an interview with cinematographer Gianlorenzo Battaglia, collectable poster art card, reversible sleeve with alternative artwork and trailers for other entries from 88 Films. Now because this is a UK release that means it's a region B BluRay and won't play in most North American players. So unless you have a region free player, this most likely won't work, but if you do have region freedom then I highly recommend picking this little gem up. Most of the releases in the "Italian Collection" from 88 Films are relatively cheap, and can be found on both Amazon or directly from the 88 Films website. I'm a big fan of both Lamberto Bava and Italian genre films, so I knew I was going to fall in love with this movie, but I hope others find it as enjoyable as I did.

Absolute Live Reviews

Fucked Up

March 19th
The Cobalt - Vancouver

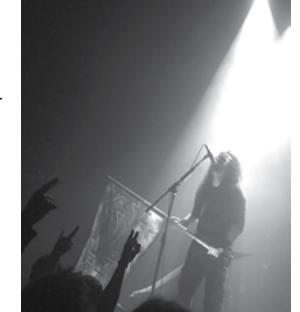


Timbre Concerts
It seemed like it was over much too soon, and I was left saying to my friends, "I think they forgot to play a song," but as the memories of the night came flooding back, I realized it was all just too good to last. It felt like the early 2000s again, I was at the front of the stage, pounding my fists, banging my head and screaming back in Damian's face to every track off of *Hidden World*, which they were playing in its entirety. I saw an Instagram post from Sandy with the caption "muscle memory is a real thing," and that's exactly how it seemed they were all playing together...effortlessly, and as if it was all ingrained, even though for the most part, while maintaining their original members; they are a vastly different band and play a seriously different style nowadays. The sound quality left a lot to be desired, but other than that, I was left feeling utterly satisfied after a short encore including an old favourite, "Generations," and "The Other Shoe," to cap off the evening. I can't speak higher of this band, I flew in from 900km away to stay for one night, to see one band, and it was absolutely worth it. From hitting the vape pen with D during the set to having him ferociously take my sweater from me and toss it by the drums without missing a beat, I definitely had a fucked up time. Judging by how frequently I was getting slammed and the stagelines and singalongs, it's safe to say most if not all felt the same.

- Pauly Hardcore

Kreator

Obituary
Midnight
Horrendous



Rickshaw Theatre, Vancouver BC
March 29, 2017
After a tough winter of bands not being able to make it to Vancouver due to the weather, we have finally been able to move into spring with an epic night of metal with Kreator and Obituary. The night started out with Horrendous from Philadelphia, with a fairly strong set. It happened to be their first time gracing the stage in Vancouver and they were able to get the crowd riled up with their mix of death metal with a touch of doom. Even through their tiring issues and sometimes-weak guitar soloing, one can see that they are a tight group with solid changes that really get the heads banging. Shortly following were the black/thrash three-piece band, Midnight from Cleveland. This band was clearly a crowd favourite, with their old-school thrash style that brought out the punk rockers in droves. With a great look of anonymity, these guys really knew how to make use of their stage space and created a heavy sound that most three-piece bands are unable to achieve. My personal favourite moment of their set was when the crowd was encouraged to jump up on the stage to be part of the show (which is no easy feat at the Rickshaw) and so local legend Dean Barnard took the lead by crowdsurfing with his cane.

Up next was a Florida death metal original, Obituary, with their classic sound and huge presence. It is always a treat to see these fellows live as they are all fantastic musicians individually and when put together create a massive wall of sound that could rattle doors off their hinges. Their set ranged from their newest self-titled album that included

such as, "Flag of Hate" and "Total Death." Mille Petrozza definitely knows how to work a crowd, and was able to get his "biggest mosh pit wall of death" to take shape. All in all, the Rickshaw staff did a great job with their part in the sound and lighting aspects and this show was a great start to an action-packed spring of concerts in the city.

- Morgan Zentner

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in the negative stereotypes that have existed forever involving anything marijuana or cannabis-related, from something fun and light like everybody who listens to stoner rock is a "stoner" because that is not true, to the stigma that those that seek medical cannabis as a natural and alternative health treatment are doing so simply "to score." At the same time [we want to] prove that being involved in the recreational side of 420 culture doesn't mean you cannot also be a productive member of society as well.

AU: Tell us about the lineup, what kind of bands will we be seeing?

CCG: We have some of the most important bands from our Calgary scene playing the 420 Festival. We also wanted to bring some of Vancouver's best out here, along with some great bands from Saskatchewan, too. However, we are really excited to fly in festival headliners, Wo Fat from Dallas, Texas for what turns out is their very first show in Canada!

AU: Are there any bands or acts you're particularly looking forward to seeing?

CCG: Besides the fact that Wo Fat is coming and playing here in Calgary for our first year, I am so thrilled that La Chinga is coming out. They are flying themselves into the Festival, playing 4/20 and then flying home the next day - RESPECT! Acientis is one of my favourite bands so any time I can see them, I am stoked! Orbital Express is another I am excited to see for the first time personally, and then there is Dead Quiet. They were the last band added, and I just cannot stop listening to their first CD, really looking forward to seeing them perform too!

AU: Is there going to be some kind of weed Expo? What kind of businesses or brands can we expect to see?

CCG: This is CC Getty and I am most infamous for the creation of the first annual 420 Music & Arts Festival in Calgary, Alberta!

AU: Tell us about 420 Fest! What's it all about? Is this the first year?

CCG: Yeah, this is the 420 Music & Arts Festival's inaugural year. What started as a conversation at a garage sale to get Vancouver's La Chinga out to Calgary for a rad 420 show, grew into a multiple night festival featuring over twenty of Western Canada's best stoner, doom, sludge, and psychedelic bands in one place with Dallas Texas legends Wo Fat, because we couldn't narrow down our musical wish lists! Once all the bands were in place, it seemed only natural to combine the music with 420 culture, the movement towards legalization and medical cannabis awareness together in one place at just what seemed like the perfect time 420.

AU: What's the format like and where and when does it take place? Are there multiple venues?

CCG: This year everything is at Distortion Live Music Venue in Calgary at 3828 MacLeod Trail, South. 4/20 - April 20th, doors open at 4pm with bands beginning at 7, with Black Mastiff headlining. April 21st & 22nd doors are at 6, bands at 7, with Acientis & Wo Fat headlining each night. The 420 Expo is free to the public and is Saturday, April 22nd. The 420 Expo will showcase an eclectic collection of artists, exhibitors, activists and other 420 enthusiasts from 10am-4pm. Also of note is our 420 Free Show/Pre-April 19th, where we will be featuring some great live music, avoid the lineup, get your festival wristbands a day early, and check out the vendors & merch ahead of the crowds.

AU: What are some of the things attendees can expect to experience? What sets 420 Fest apart from other Western music festivals?

CCG: Well there isn't really anything that really celebrates the culture of 420 in Calgary that I have ever seen other than a one off show, if it's good on a good night for a night club. On a scale like this, I don't think there is a "festival" as such, taking place on 420 anywhere in Western Canada that is doing what we are doing right now... We are really excited to have The Snake Oil poet, Xam Etsirah hosting the Festival. Xam will keep the audience entertained with his unique style and lyrical diction. The 420 Beard Contest has celebrity judges like Kent Stump from Wo Fat, prizes every night and will declare "420's Ultimate Beard" on April 22nd with a grand prize from Mammoth Beard Co. Some of Calgary's best food trucks will be available to satisfy any munchies that may occur at the 420 Festival at the 420 Expo, too. Various activists, vendors and enthusiasts will be on hand at both the Festival & the 420 Expo.

AU: Is there a 420 Festival Philosophy? Why is this sort of counterculture important?

CCG: The overall philosophy beyond the simple love of the genre of music coined "Stoner Rock" by the mass media, was to begin to bring about a change

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Hempology 101

Interview by Ira Hunter

Absolute Underground: Who are we speaking to today?

Kristen: Hi, I'm Kristen and I'm the new publisher of the Cannabis Digest. We also have Judith Stamps, the long term editor of Cannabis Digest, with us.

AU: What is Hempology?

K: Hempology 101 is a not-for-profit society based out of Victoria, BC. We are dedicated to education and legalization campaigning for cannabis. We actively support the innumerable uses of cannabis as a food, medicine, building material, bio-remediation tool, sustainable input for pulp/paper and textile production. Together the society publishes a newspaper called Cannabis Digest, which is available online at CannabisDigest.ca and at fine head-shops and dispensaries across the country.

AU: Who was it started by? When was it started?

K: Danna Rozek was a young lady working in the fledgling cannabis industry in November 1994, and Ted met her in Vancouver January 1995. She had started organizing Hempology meetings once a week. Ted Smith thought it was such a great idea

that he brought it over to Victoria in 1995, and has worked on the idea ever since. There was no active group in Vancouver for many years, but the students at UBC have an active club going out at the university and have for several years now. Ted's first idea was to write a textbook and things kind of snowballed from there. The textbook is now printed and available for sale on Amazon.

AU: Why did you first originally get involved?

K: After growing up in a very conservative corner of Alberta, I was blown away by the large weekly gatherings at UVic. As I became a frequent attendee, I began to see some of the positive fallout that these actions were having. I have always been interested in grassroots activism and standing up for what I believe in. I have been consuming cannabis for many years, and I know I'm not hurting anyone. I am an upstanding citizen, and an active volunteer in my community, and I truly feel that the flaws in policy are what causes the harms associated with drug use.

AU: What are some of the goals that Hempology has accomplished?

K: When we first set out to change the laws, cannabis was still called dope. By providing honest, free and friendly information and advice on cannabis and all its uses, we have normalized it in our society. The language and images surrounding cannabis users in the media has begun to evolve. These days no one will bat a lash if you smoke a joint walking down Johnson Street. Hempology's work has gone far in eliminating the stigma and shame formerly associated with this anciently sacred plant. We have published a quarterly newspaper now in its 52nd edition. Ted wrote and printed his textbook and many people have benefited from its wise words.

Hempology is also proud to have played in a part in the precedent-setting R v. Smith decision that found patients should have access to extracts and edibles. While we are still waiting on the slow-moving wheels of bureaucracy to legalize marijuana, in this country we are hoping we can check that one off the list soon.

AU: I understand long-time activist Ted Smith is taking a much-needed hiatus. What were some of the highlights of Ted's herbal crusade?

K: You can check out the most recent edition of Cannabis Digest or scroll over to our website at CannabisDigest.ca to read the whole article that Ted has written about his career and retirement. I know that we will never have enough space here to produce their own, but similar to the idea of 'food

security,' the people that will be most connected with their plant have, and will be least impacted by economic fluctuations will be those who grow their own. This will help ease the burden on the supposedly incoming corporate model and provide joy, occupation and affordability to gardeners. Likewise as small and medium businesses step in to supply discriminating consumers, many previously illegal career opportunities.

AU: Words of advice for Mr. Trudeau?

K: Cannabis is not a dirty word. Our generation understands that we need to move past the hysteria and into sensible drug policy and that is what we voted for. If the new system isn't as easier, cheaper and more convenient than going to the status quo than the new system will fail. If we normalize it the price will fall and the detriments will decrease; after all, nobody shoots each other tulips anymore.

AU: How can people join your cause and help out?

K: Read the newspaper and share online articles. Educate your friends and family about how cannabis can help them, check out vcbc.ca for more information. Attend our board meetings. Phone or write your local politicians to talk about sensible licensing options.

AU: When and where do the Hempology meetings take place?

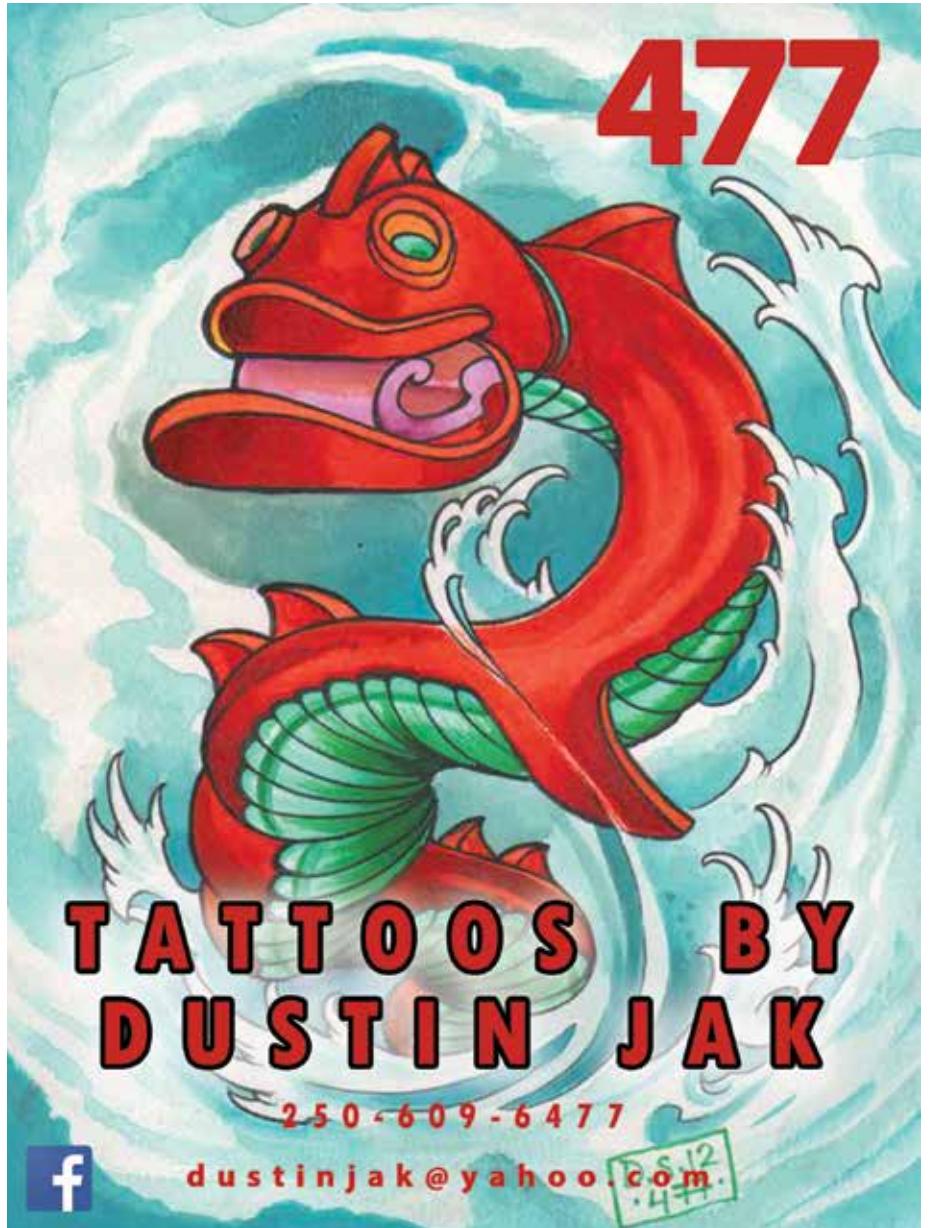
K: The Boards of Directors meets the first Tuesday of the month at 7:30 at the Green Ceiling, located in Victoria's fabulous Great Canadian Canna-mall, located at 1625 Quadra St, Victoria, BC.

The Uvic Hempology 101 Club meets 4:20pm, Wednesdays on the grass in front of the library. This is the 18th year we have met at UVic to spread the good word.

The UBC Hempology 101 Club meets every Friday at 4:20pm between the old SUB and Brock Hall.

AU: Final words of wisdom.

K: Smoke 'em if you've got 'em



THE WEED OLYMPICS



DISPENSARY SPOTLIGHT ON POTENT INDUSTRY

Cannabis Strain	Appearance	smell	taste	potency	Effects & Burn Quality	score 1-10	COMMENTS
Pre Bubba 98 (Indica)	LEAFY	NICE DANK SMELL	KUSHY DRY PULL, NOT AS KUSHY WHEN LET	MIDDLE	SLOW BURN, A LITTLE SALT+PEPPER	5	NOT AS KUSHY AS IT COULD BE
Lindsey OG (Indica Hybrid)	TIGHT BUDS LIKE LITTLE JEWELS OF GREEN EMERALDS	DRUGSY FRUITTY A RAINBOW IN MY MOUTH	TOP OF THE SCALE	BEAUTIFUL & SMOOTH LIKE A LEPRECHAUN'S BELLY	9	LINDSEY OG CLODDERED ME THE WAY LOHAN CRASHES THE CAR	
MKU (Indica)	LOVELY GINGER HAIRS, CRUNCHY & CRYSTALLY	NOT GLITTY, AN ELEPHANT FART	FAIR TO MIDLIN'	BURNING WET AND EARLY SMOKING OUT OF A PIPE MADE OF MOST A TITTLE ROUGH DURIN MY THROAT	4	MADE THE PRE BUDDA TASTE LIKE THE LINDSEY OG	
Death Star (Indica)	MUMMIFIED EWOK TURD CRUMPLY & DUSTY	WOOKIEE FUR WITH MILD PINE TINGE	STRONG LIKE JAR JAR DINKS' ACCENT	HAN SHOT FIRST BECAUSE GREEDO SMOKED THIS	9	I COULD WATCH THE PHANTOM MENACE TRILOGY AFTER SMOKING THIS. SMOOTH LIKE YODA'S DALLS.	
OG Cheese (Hybrid)	STICKY & LUMPY LIKE A KLINGON	FUNKY SOUR TONES. SWEEET CHEESE FLAVOR	HARD 8	I REALLY WANT SOME KRAFT DINNER NOW.	8	THEY GOT LOTS OF NEW FLAVORS FOR NOW. YOU CAN REALLY EXPERIMENT WITH THEM. FUCK AM I HUNGRY!	
Lost Coast OG (Hybrid)	BOULDER LIKE THUNDER NUTS	THUNDER NUTS	LIKE THE PROMISE OF A NEW FUTURE. FIREWORKS ON MY TONGUE	I FORGOT THE QUESTION	MY HEAD IS VIBRATING LIKE A LOPSIDED CEILING FAN	10	I COULD REMAIN LOST FOR DAYS ON THIS COAST WHERE IS THE JAM MY HEAD IS TOAST

Cannabis Strain	Appearance	smell	taste	potency	Effects & Burn Quality	score 1-10	COMMENTS
Pre Bubba 98 (Indica)	Leafy and sparse. Could have been trimmed better. Crystallized with hints of purple.	Slight Kushy smell with tangs of leprosie.	Tastes like burning.	Mid-Range.	My mouth started to water, so basically the opposite of dry-mouth. This weed seems a tad bit damp.	4	Nothing to write home about, but not the worst I've ever smoked either. Maybe Pre Bubba stands for premature? Tastes like hay, ain't no cowboy.
Lindsey OG (Indica Hybrid)	Nice tight nuggets. Glistening Crystal. Some purple almost black leaves.	Some hints of leprosie.	Strong and peppery with hints of honey. Subtle notes of leprosie.	Blast off to Happy Town!!!	Dark & Purple like Barney's Evil Twin, gives you a euphoric feeling when you burn that sucker. Nice white ash. Clean burning and very tasty.	8	First time trying this strain, I've heard a lot of good things, and I was not disappointed. Long lasting potent effects. Clobbered is word that comes to mind.
MKU (Indica)	Sparkling goodness with the good kind of orange hairs.	Deep Fragrance. Indescribably awesome. Earthy smell like the forest floor.	Low-Range.	My tongue is no longer comfortable in my mouth.	Like the Death Star, this bud explodes with THC crystals. Planning my attack run on the Death Star in a good way.	2	Is this outdoor? Ditch weed taste. Would make excellent compost. Possibly a high CBD low THC strain.
Death Star (Indica)	Dry and crizzly. Big round buds, similar to the Millennium Falcon's Jedi training ball.	Strangely trimmed. Lots of long leaf left behind.	Interesting flavour that pleases the taste buds.	Cured my headache and I'm back to the Dark Side in a good way.	Quiet time for go with that cheese? It must be good because everyone bogarted the joint!	7	Left everyone in awe like when Luke finds out Leia is his sister. The Death Star always wins. Blast! Star Wars conversations broke out amongst the judges.
OG Cheese (Hybrid)	Strangely trimmed. Lots of long leaf left behind.	Not like any cheese I've ever smelt before. I want to like it.	Tor 2 tokes will serve you up on a platter.	Sticky icky. 420 everyday. Victory lap. Overpowered all.	BAM!! With a right left, right left you're toothless. And then you say goddamn they ruthless!	9	Brewed a powerful thint, good thing they have coconut water available at the Green Ceiling. Not very sticky when chopped up. Great high but maybe could have been grown an extra week to age the cheese even more.
Lost Coast OG (Hybrid)	Lovely dark green leaves and nubby goodness!	Earthy licorice. Pure Kushness! The taste of Victory!!!	Earthy licorice. The taste of Victory!!!	Not a fan... maybe if it was drier.	Cotton Candy & Licorice fusing into one in my mouth. I felt my brain expand and my eye balls bugged out. Winner Winner Chicken Dinner!	10	

Cannabis Strain	Appearance	smell	taste	potency	Effects & Burn Quality	score 1-10	COMMENTS
Pre Bubba 98 (Indica)	FLUFFY DARK	EARTHY	TASTES WET PREMATURE MAYBE?	MIDDLE OF THE ROAD	SLOW WET BURN, SUCKING HARD FOR LITTLE SMOKE...	2	NOT A FAN... MAYBE IF IT WAS DRYER.
Lindsey OG (Indica Hybrid)	BIT OF PURPLE, DENSE LIL' NUGS	SLIGHT CITRUS SMELL, LEMON?	ALWAYS GOOD, SWEET SKUNKY LEMON?	STILL A BIT MID BUT A NICHE WARM HEAVY FEELING	GOOD CLEAN ASH. EVEN BURN. I KEEP MY EYE ON THE JUDGE WAITING FOR IT TO COME BACK.	8	FYI THIS STRAIN SQUISHES REALLY WELL. I LOVE HER.
MKU (Indica)	ALL THE ORANGE HAIRS	PINEY	WOODY TASTE LIKE A CAMPFIRE WITH GARBAGE BURNING.	NOT A PLEASANT FEELING. YUK, I'M GOING FOR A WALK.	BURN WAS OK BUT I STOPPED AFTER 2 HOOFS.	3	AFTERTASTE IS GROSS. I CAN'T WAIT FOR THE NEXT STRAIN TO WASH AWAY THIS TASTE.
Death Star (Indica)	DARK SIDE LOOKS STRONG.	SIMMELLS LIKE B.O. BUT IN A GOOD WAY.	NICE TASTE. NEED COOKIES.	HUH? WHAT AM I DOING AGAIN?	MADE ME SNEEZE AND MY NOSE TINGLE. EVEN BURN.	8	THE OTHER STRAINS WERE A LIE, THERE IS ONLY "PASSION, STRENGTH, POWER, VICTORY, THE FORCE"
OG Cheese (Hybrid)	FROSTY TIPS AND MANICURED LIKE A CALL GIRL	DEFINITE FOOT SMELL LIKE A SKUNK	MMMM... SPICY GOOD AFTERTASTE	MAKES ME HAPPY, ACTIVE, AND RELAXED	BURNS EVEN, SMOOTH, AND CLEAN. I WISH IT WAS A FATTER JOINT. WANT MORE!	9	I LOVE CHEEZE! GIVES ME THE MUNCHIES AND THE ROOM SMELLS SO GOOD...
Lost Coast OG (Hybrid)	A SAGE/PINE SMELL. I LIKE IT! SMELLS LIKE THE OKANAGAN.	GINGIVITIS. TIGHT LUMPY.	OH... TASTES LIKE IT SMELLS. HEY PASS THAT BACK!	I WANT A NAP NOW AFTER ALL THAT	I LIKED THE TASTE. BURNED WELL. I CAN'T THINK OF MORE WORDS... I'M COOKED	9	I WANNA SQUISH THIS. I'VE REALLY ENJOYED THIS, I'M REMEMBERING THIS STRAIN.

It was a tight competition with Lost Coast OG edging out OG Cheese for the Gold Medal by a single point, and Death Star taking the Bronze.

GOLD MEDAL: LOST COAST OG
SILVER: OG CHEESE
BRONZE: DEATH STAR
PARTICIPATION RIBBON: LINDSEY OG

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SUNSET BEACH

Skunk & Panda's Shatter Shack

Interview by Ira Hunter

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to today and what are you best known for?

Nicole Little: My name is Nicole Little and I am the Operations Manager at Skunk & Panda's Shatter Shack in the Great Canadian Canna Mall.

AU: How did you first become involved in the marijuana industry?

NL: Like so many of my amazing peers and colleagues in the industry, it began with activism. I dove in full throttle once I decided to cut back my commitments with my employer of 20-something years when offered the opportunity to open my first shop.

AU: What is the plan for this year's 420 celebration in Victoria?

NL: We have a whole day planned. We've organized a market place and we're lining up some amazing local musical acts and other entertainment. There will be contests and raffles, too. Lots going on and it's all going to be at The Green Ceiling.

AU: Who else is helping you organize it?

NL: We have an amazing committee of people working really hard to make this event happen. It's composed of staff of the lounge and the mall and friends of both.

AU: What are your thoughts on the future for medical and recreational marijuana?

NL: We need the government to recognize the contributions that the craft market has made to the industry and take seriously the task force recommendations advocating for consumption lounges and store-front dispensaries. Without

420

Vancouver.com



Somewhere To Go

WORLD PREMIERE
Saturday, March 4th at The Roxy
Doors at 7pm Screening at 8pm

working on it that sacrificing material was torture. I also kept wondering, "What am I missing?" That's when I knew I needed to ask for help.

AU: Who else helped you complete this project?

PO: In the fall of 2015, I showed the film to local legends Scott Henderson, Jason Bonneau, Murray Acton, Rob Nesbit, Ricky Long, and Steve Bailey to get feedback on how to proceed. They all gave me great advice, and then Rob and Steve started coming over every Thursday for over a year to help with the script, editing and staying focused on the big picture. My brain might very well have imploded had it not been for these two! They were so helpful and we had such a good time working together. They kept the hard work fun, lots of jokes and laughs.

In the summer of 2016, Jason Schreurs came on board to help with social media, events planning etc. His sound judgment and passion for the Victoria punk scene made him the perfect addition to our team. All three guys are super knowledgeable, decisive, reliable and hilarious! Their involvement with the film was truly invaluable. Damn, I love those guys!

did a great job documenting it in the book/CD set *All Your Ears Can Hear*. Pick up a copy for a comprehensive look at the scene as it was from 1978-1984.

AU: Tell us about the premiere screening at the Roxy theatre in Victoria. I understand bands used to play there back in the day.

PO: The premiere was a huge success. It was such an amazing and special night. People who were part of the scene in the early days were reunited after 30+ years.

Lots of reminiscing and catching up was going on that night and the days surrounding it. Tim Crow of Red Tide said that it felt like he had snorted a pile of déjà vu. Tim Crow was at an infamous gig at the Roxy back in 1987 when they used to have bands play there. The Dayglo, Mission of Christ and Red Tide were on the bill, things got crazy, someone set off the fire extinguishers (apparently on Murray Acton's suggestion), chaos ensued, foam was everywhere, and the cops were called in to shut down the show. I think a song or two might have been written about that night. The Roxy was the perfect place to have the premiere. A bunch of people who were at that early show in '87 were also there for the premiere. The enthusiasm in the air was undeniable. I loved that night!

AU: How has the film been received outside of Victoria so far?

PO: In terms of film festivals, *Somewhere To Go* has already won five awards from various festivals around the world. The oldest cinema in all of Germany has asked to screen it and we've even had interest from Russia and Denmark, as well. Our Facebook page has garnered quite a bit of attention, too. We have followers from 52 different countries, which is pretty cool.

AU: Any future projects planned?

PO: No solid plans yet, but have been considering some options.

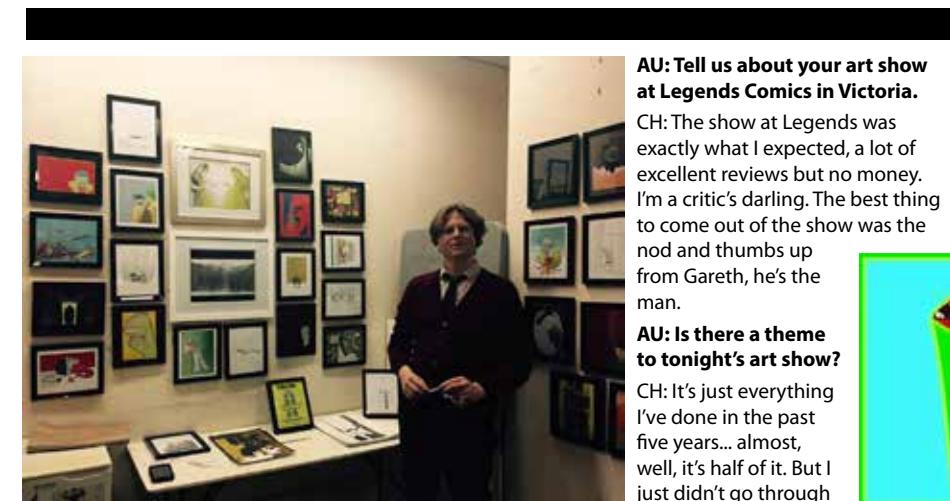
AU: What is the name of the punk band on the movie poster?

PO: The band is called Distortion. They were a short-lived punk band ('81-'82) that came out of Reynolds High School. Russ Binder took that photo. He has a lot of great photos of that era.



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Clayton Hall

Master of the Weirdos
Interview by Ira Hunter

AU: Tell us about your art show at Legends Comics in Victoria.
CH: The show at Legends was exactly what I expected, a lot of excellent reviews but no money. I'm a critic's darling. The best thing to come out of the show was the nod and thumbs up from Gareth, he's the man.

AU: So you paid attention to the backgrounds.
CH: Yeah, I did.

AU: So you're not just drawing stuff at the front, you have a background to your art, too.

CH: Yes. A lot of them are pretty sparse, though. I should really learn how to do more figures, people interacting with each other. They're all kind of lonely...

AU: Do you have any formal training?
CH: Also there's a silver surfer one, I gave him a chin. I shouldn't have given him a chin, it bugs me, it's this little tiny black line... See his chin? I don't like the chin.

AU: If he didn't have the chin he'd be one big penis head!
CH: Charley Brown's evil twin. He's got a bat.

AU: This one is called "Unicorns Are Ridiculous." These are highly erotic.
CH: They are not erotic.

AU: What about that kid with the carrot? What about those guys, all coming out of each others' mouths?
CH: The tickle pig...

AU: You are the person who makes a bunch of the cool looking ads in the mag. How long have you been doing graphic design for *Absolute Underground*?

CH: Ten years, this July.

AU: Ten years! The magazine's only been out for like thirteen years.

CH: Yeah, I know. I took over for the previous guy that had a mental breakdown.

AU: Plans for the future?
CH: The next five year project I'm working on is trying to do a cross between Egon Schiele and Bernie Wrightson. Artistically, I think that's where I sit.

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ARTIST PROFILE

AU: It's a paradox. Words for inspiring youth of the art world?

CH: Practice, practice, practice, every day! Stop paying attention in math class and just doodle. Just keep on doing it, doodle doodle doodle!

AU: Is Frank Miller going to sue you for this one?

CH: Which one?

AU: The Big Guy and Rusty The Boy Robot.

CH: Geoff Darrow did it. This line is crooked, I wasn't going to bring it.

AU: Oh wow, the whole thing is crooked, you hung it crooked too... burn it.

CH: Also there's a silver surfer one, I gave him a chin. I shouldn't have given him a chin, it bugs me, it's this little tiny black line... See his chin? I don't like the chin.

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Turbo Vixen

Interview by Dustin Jak

Vancouver is no stranger to killer serious strip-style metal/rock n roll. They have a million dive bars, three hundred tons of fake tits, legal weed, and the biggest drug problem in the western world, so why not have some ball-scorching-pussy-burning drag-riot metal going the fuck down? Crystal Pistol were killer, along with punk acts like The Halos, JPS, ChinaTown and Spitfires, teetering on the border of punk and hair metal at various points in their careers. Let's not forget Flash Bastard, who managed to get booted from a major touring bill with Scorpions and Motley Crue, just for being rowdy cunts! Fast forward a decade or so, and we come to Turbo Vixen. I caught up with these guys after a few lewdly obscene messages were left on my sister's phone.

Aaron: Aaron, drums, and Jeremy, guitar. Jesse is inside the liquor store, he is the singer.

AU: What store are you guys at?

Aaron: Toby's in North Van by Jeremy's house, where we jam. This is Turbo Vixen.

AU: What other bands were you guys in? After seeing some footage, it's obvious that you guys had some previous schooling.

Jesse: I was in Hellchamber and Brewd Awakening.

Jeremy: I was in Toxic Remedy.

Aaron: I was in Horde of Anachron, Burialkult, doing a US tour soon with Unleash The Archers.

AU: So you guys all have pretty extensive thrash and metal backgrounds?

Aaron: We were used to writing the heavier stuff for sure, writing these catchier hooks was not easy either, as you know.

AU: Who are the influences for this band?

Jesse: Me and Jeremy met at a Whitesnake show.

AU: Fuck, I saw them with Sykes in '84 here, with Quiet Riot and Kick Axe!

Jesse: We wanted to start a band and Grant Archers told us about this guy from Asia, we were surprised when we met him that he was not Asian! Anyway, we all wanted to start with an 80s style.

AU: What are your favourite Halen records?

Aaron: First.

Jesse: First.

Jeremy: First.

AU: That was easy. Next question: What are some local bands you appreciate?

Jesse: Unleash The Archers, Iron Kingdom.

Jeremy: La Chinga.

AU: Yeah Solyom is a great drummer, he drummed in Flash Bastard at one point and sang in Spitfires... so he is no spring chicken fucker! How about you, Aaron?

Aaron: This is a quote for all of you metalheads... No One! You are all truly beneath us!

AU: Nice I know that one, Battles in the North! Where do you guys want to play most?

Turbo Vixen: We want to do some outdoor shows, for sure. We have to play the Commodore.

AU: Any plans to record?

Aaron: We are doing pre-production with Andrew Kingsley and Mark at Rain City Recorders, then back into the studio with Mark, who did Massgrave and Archspire.

AU: What bands influenced you growing up, and don't say fuckin' Lou Reed or King Crimson like half of these other clown-dicks!

Jesse: Aerosmith, Sabbath, Led Zeppelin

Jeremy: Heaven and Hell by Black Sabbath.

Aaron: Pantera, Guns N Roses, Pink Floyd's The

Wall.

AU: What are some of your favourite new bands?

TV: Steel Panther, of course. Airbourne, Striker, fuck, these guys like everything from Scorpions to Dying Fetus.

AU: What are some of the best shows you've seen?

TV: Paul McCartney, Blasphemy, Archgoat, Winger, last Motley Crue show was epic! We got drunk with Uli Jon Roth when he played all of *Toys Tapes*. Fuck, we almost played with Autograph. Also we almost played with Udo.

AU: Any bands you really want to play with?

TV: Invisible Orange! Also shout outs to Joey Hawking from Journeyman Productions (they have set up shows for us out here)

AU: What are your favourite drugs?

TV: All the fun ones.. the ones with no fentanyl. Anything that won't make you go soft. If I can crush it, it goes up the nose, if it's smack then we shoot it between our toes!

AU: That's a colourful answer for sure, good to see that kids still know how to have fun these days! Any messages to our readers out there?

TV: New LP coming soon, and we're also going to be invading Vancouver Island on June 30th at Logan's with Mags and Poor Choices. Turbo Vixen is here to create an everlasting impression and spread rock and roll!

facebook.com/turbvix



BOUNDARIES and TIES

The Place of Metal Music in Communities

This three-day conference explores the role of Heavy Metal in the formation of identity and community. A wide range of topics will be covered, including keynotes by Keith Khan-Harris, author of *Extreme Metal: Music and Culture on the Edge*, as well as by Brittney Slayes, lead singer of *Unleash the Archers*.

www.hcmc.uvic.ca/boundariesandties

June 9-11
At The University of Victoria

ISMS   ABSOLUTE UNDERGROUND

Exploring Metal Music and its Intersections: The Boundaries and Ties Conference

By Casey Lazar

"Boundaries and Ties: The Place of Metal Music in Communities" is a multi-day conference focused on Metal Music Studies that will take place June 9-11, 2017 at the University of Victoria. Metal Music Studies stands at the intersection between the social sciences and humanities. Metal Music Studies is a relatively small but rapidly growing international field. Since 2008, over ten international conferences have taken place around the world that have focused on the sociological, cultural, and political aspects of metal music. Boundaries and Ties is the first International Society for Metal Music Studies (the only internationally recognized learned society devoted to this area of research) conference to be held in Canada. The continued increase of scholarly attention to heavy metal demonstrates how metal music can be an effective analytical and methodological lens to explore how wider cultural, social, political, and economic shifts impact forms of popular culture, music practices and localized identities. The conference will feature two keynote speakers. The first keynote speaker is Dr. Keith Kahn-Harris, a prominent and influential Metal Music Studies scholar from London, UK. His presentation "Beyond Transgression: Breaking Metal's Boundaries" attempts to reconsider the nature of metal's transgression in a digitally abundant age in which the boundaries of the 'sayable' and 'doable' are being continually challenged and transformed. Keith's talk aims to question the role transgression plays in metal and its conceptual effectiveness when applying it to studies of metal music and its cultural practices. We are also pleased to have Brittney Slayes, the lead singer of Victoria-born heavy metal band *Unleash the Archers*, as our second keynote speaker. Her talk, entitled "View from the Apex: A Metal Musician's Views on Metal and Community" will draw from her experiences performing locally and touring and share her perspective on heavy metal communities: be they local scenes, international fans, or touring bands. She will also touch on the ever-dreaded 'women in metal' question, and explore the financial aspect of being a metal musician.

The variety of topics that will be discussed at the conference, as well as the keynote speakers reflect the diversity of metal music and its global influence. Some of the papers explore the histories of metal, developments of localized metal scenes, gendered critiques of metal, and



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Absolute Comic-Geddon



Action Lab Comics

By Ed Sum

Action Lab Comics built its name on releasing a wide range of genre comics, ranging from kid-friendly to horror. The founders of this publishing house are Shawn Pryor (*Exo-1* & *The Rocksolid Steelbots*), Dave Dwonch (*Ghost Town*) and Shawn Gabborin. This column's spotlight is with Gabborin. Readers might know his work, *Palm Reader* and *Short Stack*. As the head writer for this company's *Puppet Master*, he is part of the collective creative mind for taking these fond film monsters and putting them in print. Not only has this series expanded the mythos, it has also elevated them to new heights! They are as the first three films set them out to be: scary!

Absolute Underground: Of all the horror tie-in material, and aside from *Puppet Master*, what would you say are recommended books for *Absolute Underground* readers to look at?



their other properties as a three or four-issue mini series. At this point, we have already done three issue stories for *Trancers*, *Gingerdead Man* and *Oblivion*. As a fan of the films, that was a lot of fun to bring together the creative team and watch them bring it to life. Tim Seeley wrote a great sequel to the existing films, and Romina Moranelli just killed it on the art!

Doctor Mordrid is coming up next, with *Subspecies* and a possible *Killjoy* series to follow. I'm a huge Full Moon fan, so I'd take on their entire catalog if I could! But it honestly comes down to finding the right creative teams who know/respect the source material, and reaching that audience!

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AU: Considering the success of *Puppet Master*, now with two Halloween specials, are you going to continue the tradition?

SG: I essentially used them as an excuse to put the *Puppet Master* puppets into other subgenres (*Sorority House Massacre* and *Creature Feature*, respectively). I'd like to do another, but we'll see if it fits in with our publishing schedule for 2017 or not.

AU: For a change of pace, and unexpected surprise, would you consider another season for the puppets to terrorize, like Easter?

SG: I DEFINITELY would! Honestly, the problem is that we have to turn solicitation info in to our distributor five months before the book comes out. So by the time my mind gets into Easter mode, it's way too late to put one together. I'm always in Halloween mode, though, so I can track that easily! It really is just a side effect of me focusing on the ongoing series rather than a month-by-month point of view.

AU: And those are original tales. Thinking about Action Lab's collaboration with Full Moon Entertainment, I like the fact that there are other titles.

Some are out, like *Oblivion*, but what else can you say?

SG: Our deal with Full Moon is to feature a handful of

their other properties as a three or four-issue mini series. At this point, we have already done three issue stories for *Trancers*, *Gingerdead Man* and *Oblivion*. As a fan of the films, that was a lot of fun to bring together the creative team and watch them bring it to life. Tim Seeley wrote a great sequel to the existing films, and Romina Moranelli just killed it on the art!

AU: Will any ideas presented in the *Axis* storyline leak into the comics after it is all out?

SG: That all depends on what they do and if I can work it in. I just introduced (in a sense) the Nazi puppets into the comics in Issue #18, so at least that part is still intact. Honestly what it comes down to is that, for me, the timeline split when I started the comics. Everything they had done up to that point was canon for me... but if they

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do something in the films after that split that contradict what I've written, I can just ignore that... or, if I'm feeling like having some fun, I can try to twist things around and see if I can make it fit. It all depends what they do, honestly.

AU: Even if this series comes to an end, what would you recommend to readers who want to look at the catalogue of your company's work?

SG: Having something for everyone is something that we dedicated ourselves to early on. We've got titles such as *Princeless* and *Vamplets* which are great for kids, *Herald*; *Lovercraft & Tesla* and *Bigfoot*; *Sword of the Earthman* are both awesome teen books, and on the mature side, I'd point people to *Tomboy* and *Zombie Tramp*. We've also got some great upcoming stuff such as *Spencer & Locke* (basically, what if Calvin & Hobbes grew up in Sin City) and *Brigands* (picture *Ocean's 11* set in medieval times), which are both going to be amazing!

ANTIPOTIC

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a fascination with the macabre.

AU: What are some of your favourite horror movies?

DD: Too many to list, but I will try: *28 Days Later*, *Last Man on Earth*, *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* I, II, *Friday the 13th* III, IV, *Deathgasm*, *The Voices*, *Tucker and Dale Vs Evil*, *Evil Dead* I, II, *Halloween* I, III, *Cemetery Man*, *Nightmare on Elm Street* III, *Hellraiser* I, II. It really is hard to list, I love lots of movies from lots of different subgenres but early 80s horror is my childhood.

AU: When did you first decide to start up the Calgary Horror Convention and why?

DD: I worked in Corporate IT for years and became a cubicle creature, but as a contractor there was so much instability that one day I decided life was too short to be doing something you don't love. I finally accepted that if money or stability wasn't to come, I am better off doing something that made me happy. I was a fucking idiot, didn't have a clue what I was doing, even though I had education and experience in marketing and business. I am glad I was naïve or I would not have started the show, it definitely isn't a get rich quick kind of scenario, I think I would have more money and stability working for 7-11, but it is coming.

AU: What sets your convention apart from others in Canada?

DD: We were the first ever Horror Convention in Canada, and still the largest. We have a long way to go, but every year we keep improving every aspect of the show. When I started, there was no such thing as Horror Vendors in Alberta, now every year there is a



waiting list. The Calgary Horror Con International Film Festival takes in over 1000 submissions each year, with our finalists for the last several years getting North American distribution. Our content keeps getting better and better. We are building a name and even have some of our past guests in films that get rejected as we are trying to bring the best of the best to horror fans. This year I am adding more industry panels, including more SFX Makeup demos.

AU: Who are some of the guests you are bringing

in this year?

DD: Doug Bradley, Pinhead – *Hellraiser* I, II; Ashley Laurence, *Hellraiser* I, II, John Dugan, Grandpa – *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*; Elise and Electra Avellan, *Death Proof*, *Planet Terror*; John Kassir, Cryptkeeper - *Tales from the Crypt*, Lloyd Kaufman, *Toxic Avenger*, Zach Galligan, Billy – *Gremlins* I, II; Suzanne Snyder, *Weird Science*, *Killer Klowns from Outer Space*; and Susan Backline, *Jaws*.

AU: Who are some of the bigger names you've had attend your convention in the past.

DD: Tom Atkins, Barbara Crampton, Jeffrey Combs, Heather Langenkamp, Bill Moseley, Tom Savini, Tony Todd, Dee Wallace, Richard Brooker, and Bob Elmore. We have been lucky as we attracted some really great guests, too many to mention.

AU: Who are some bucket list guests you would still like to bring to future



events?

DD: Warwick Davis, Brad Dourif, Bruce Campbell, Elvira, Tobin Bell, Shawnee Smith, Danielle Harris, Julie Adams, Barbara Steele, Sid Haig, Dieter Laser, and Jessica Harper. This is a small part of my list.

AU: Any special events, panels, or screenings planned for this years event?

DD: We have a kickoff party which includes a Calgary tradition of the White Hat Ceremony. It may seem odd to offer horror celebrities white hats, but it is has been a symbol of Calgarian hospitality and part of it amuses me, I am not a cowboy. We have live performances throughout the night, and darkwave/electro-pop duo Strvngers will be closing out the night.

Some feature films we are excited to show are the Spanish film *Sinister Circle* from Peru and the American film *The Evil Within*, starring Sean Patrick Flanery, Dina Meyer, Frederick Koehler and Michael Berryman, and another American feature called *CarousHell* about a unicorn carousel horse that goes on a killing spree. For short films, some of our top picks are "Neon Sluts" from France, Canadian short "Fun," and Korean film "The Insect Girl."

Panels this year will include most of the guests led by industry professionals and I am so thrilled to include *Absolute Underground* in the list of moderators.

AU: When and where is this horror convention?

DD: June 10th & 11th, 2017 at the Clarion Hotel in Calgary

AU: Final words for Canadian horror fans?

DD: Horror fans, thanks for your support! Without you, we would not be getting bigger and better each year. And I am very grateful for being able to follow my dream for the last six years I have been doing this, and super excited to bring everyone a rockin' year seven!

www.horror-con.ca

Calgary Horror Con

Interview by AU Editorial
By AU Editorial

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking to today and what are you most infamous for?

Dan Doherty: CEO and Founder of the Calgary Horror Con

AU: What first got you into horror?

DD: The local corner store in a small town; I would rent VHS tapes, scooping up all the horror titles I could. Bravery was a quality that I wanted to have, and horror was a way to test it at a safe distance. I always had a dark sense of humour, loving to shock people and



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SHRED SESSION



Barrier Kult

Interview by Malcolm Eric Hassin and PD

Absolute Underground: Who are the two Kult members in our presence today?

DMODW: My name is Deer Man of Dark Woods.

DLD: My name is Depth Leviathan Dweller

AU: Where did those names come from?

DMODW: They came from our past, ideas rooted in our personalities prior to the Barrier Kult, so 'spiritual' ideas, mine was rooted in nature, nature worship and animal rights.

DLD: You should also talk about the 'ghost' you saw.

DMODW: Before I became the DMODW I was driving home late at night and I saw what looked like a deer but also a man morphed into one body. I stopped my car and he flopped over the side of a barrier and he sorta slithered his way down a mountain side. I tried to follow him but could never find him again and that stuck in my head since then so I wanted to reference that I thought I was almost an omen for me.

DLD: I am a reference to a lake monster of the Okanagan and the monsters off the coast of Vancouver as well.

AU: Who comes up with the artwork for the Barrier Kult?

DLD: That would be me, I make up all the names, I do all of the artwork. I do all of the speeches. Even when a member is asked to do an interview, I get the idea of what they want to portray in the interview, then I write the interview.

DMODW: So whenever I am asked to do an interview as DMODW, I come to DLD, I will formulate an

them, but obviously us two, we have Hammerer of Roots, Beast of Gaauvaden, the list goes on and on. Muskellunge of Dark Island.

DLD: There are new ones as well; Cthylla.

DMODW: We have a female Barrier Kult member which has been something new for us, which we are really excited about. She's been destroying barriers lately.

AU: Why the anonymity for Kult members?

DMODW: When the Kult made its start, basically it was made up of guys like ourselves that were ex- or currently sponsored by the industry. And when we started the Kult we wanted to be a militant fascination with skating tight transitions, but we wanted to strip any idea of creativity, we wanted to strip any idea that a skateboarder is an identifiable personality, it's a militant movement against skateboarders thinking they're artist simply because they are good at kicking around a skateboard.

AU: What's the origin of the Barrier Kult?

DMODW: DLD and I both came from the Okanagan and those were the origins of it originally Winfield, Vernon... a lot of inspiration from the lakes and the mountains we lived around, so that's where it was born out of. When we lived out there, we were constantly skating early barriers in the woods around the lakes, and that's where it all started, so when we came to Vancouver a lot of that deep rooted interest in the environment came from the Okanagan. And from there we grew; the Barrier Kult picked members who also had deep rooted themes in where they came from, their lives, their personalities.

AU: Who comes up with the artwork for the Barrier Kult?

DLD: That would be me, I make up all the names, I do all of the artwork. I do all of the speeches. Even when a member is asked to do an interview, I get the idea of what they want to portray in the interview, then I write the interview.

DMODW: So whenever I am asked to do an interview as DMODW, I come to DLD, I will formulate an

interview and DLD is the man behind the curtain, he has developed our whole language the whole concept around the Barrier Kult, and we sort of just nurtured that and always gone that way of keeping it central themed from one mind, one idea and supported that.

DLD: Yeah so it turns into like a, to use the term again, militant parallel... everything has to be like he described, like one line.

DMODW: But each member has a 'moral' drive; I have a strong animal rights background. I always want to bring those ideas to these interviews. I'll bring my ideas to DLD, and he will translate that into Barrier Kult language. To express ourselves and keep our ideas in theme, that's been a creative push for us since day one.

DLD: A very important part of the Barrier Kult is that it is very much like a propaganda movement; I like all of the members to be a cardboard representation. Almost like a tool, so again yes, propaganda-driven.

AU: How important is the connection to the music and the act of skating?

DLD: Again it's congruent, when you think of the descent into a deep lake or the ocean and then you think of the controlled chaos and war of sound that creates a vision that almost keeps us in a trance, it's humbling, and that's the only way we can kinda stay congruent and again in check with our members, as well.

AU: When you talk about rituals, what about a place like the Wong Kee Barriers?

DLD: That's an incredibly important altar to us because of Carlos Longo. There is a really famous Skull Skates related photograph of Carlos Longo doing a rock'n roll on the Wong Kee barriers and that was a massive massive influence on our aesthetic and what we like to skate and to have a pure understanding that in the mid 80s there was someone as ritual and cult and worship as Carlos doing a rock'n roll, with the photo by PD.

AU: There's a rumour that there is a new Barrier

Kult movie in the works. Is that true?

DMODW: Yes, we have a *Barrier Kult Video Horde* part two, I have done a lot of video parts with other members throughout the years since the first one, very similar to the original video we put out; [it has] the same intensity, heaviness, ritual-ness, rawness we have worked really hard to cover as many barriers as we can, as many Barrier Kult members as we do. We have also dug really deep to find the most ritual or horrific films that we can to integrate into the movie, much like the first one. It's really just an updated version. We have new members that will have full parts in the video, our new female member who will have a full part in our video. We have a Japanese faction that will have a full part in the new video, we have San Diego riders and also a friends section with guest appearances, a lot of surprises coming up for the new *Horde 2* video.

AU: Any Closing comments?

DLD: I would like to acknowledge support of the Kult, Skull Skates is like the epicentre of what we do, Gullwing trucks, Heroin Skateboards.

DMODW: For me I have had major support through Heroin Skateboards who have been awesome out of L.A. Gullwing trucks has been a huge part of our development over the last few years. Emerica Shoes.

DLD: It's amazing we have been able to work with PD, Skull Skates and everything, anything we were completely obsessed with in the 80s again, it's like this vicious war circle that's coming back and letting us put out a Gullwing BA, KU, Pro 3, or a Barrier Kult Horse Deck. There's also been lots of influence from the Jaks Skate team and the Dead Men in Vernon. Full interviews can be seen at: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-oQAWOgTQ75TyquKcg> thebarrierkult.blogspot.com/ barrierkult.bigcartel.com/ PHOTO CREDIT: Jiles Barrett



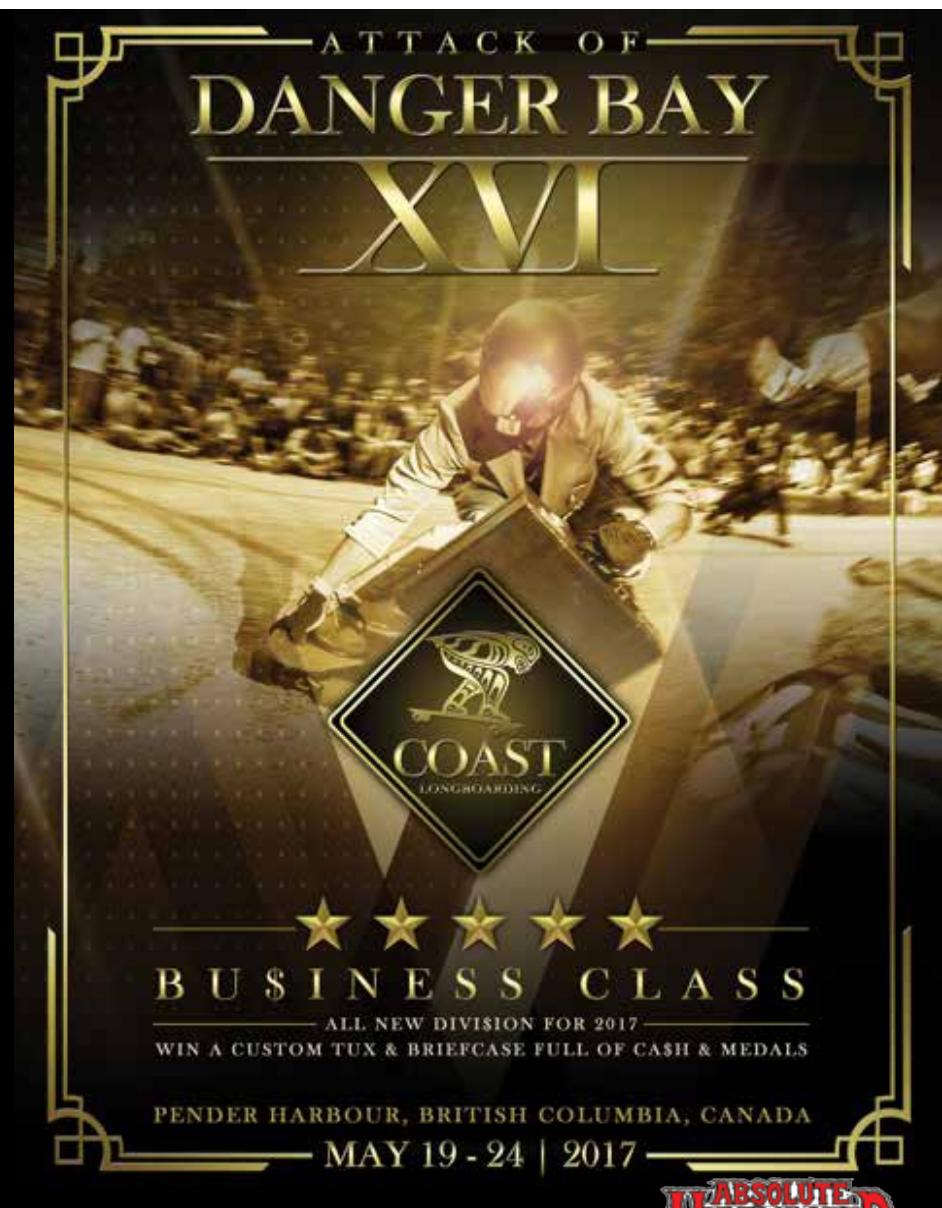
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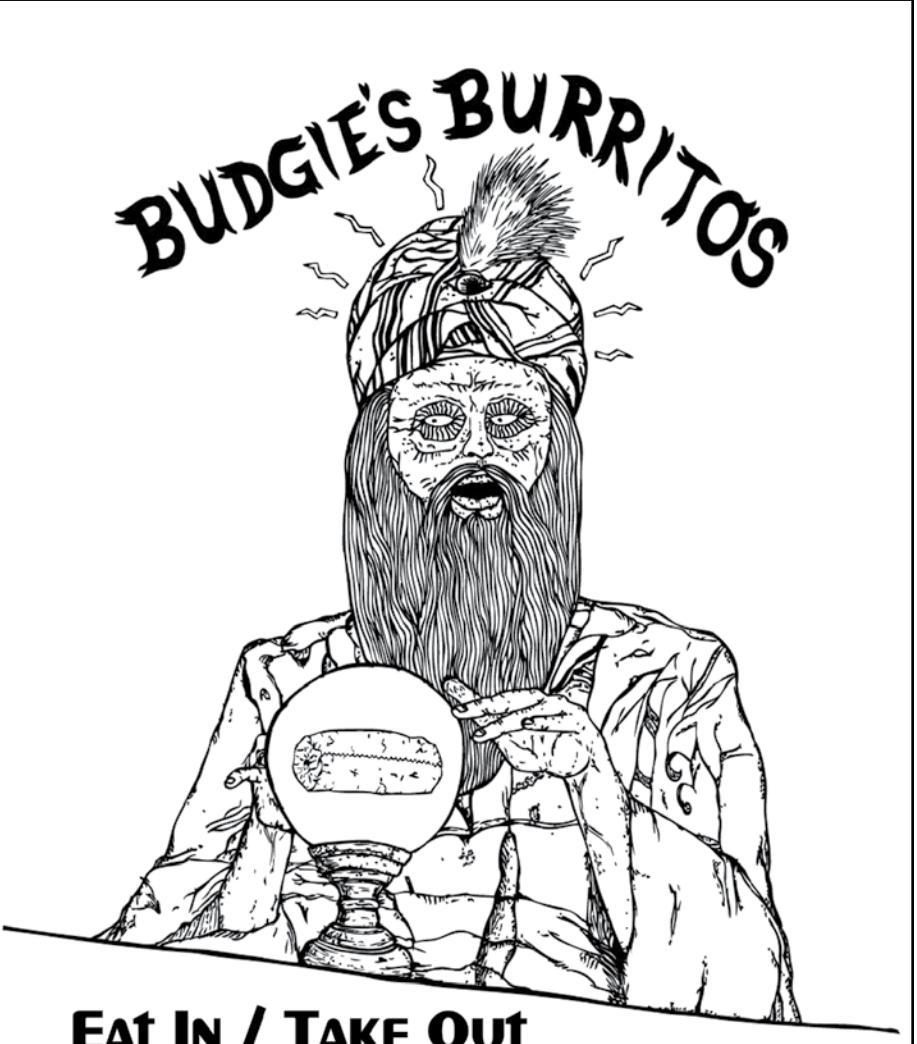
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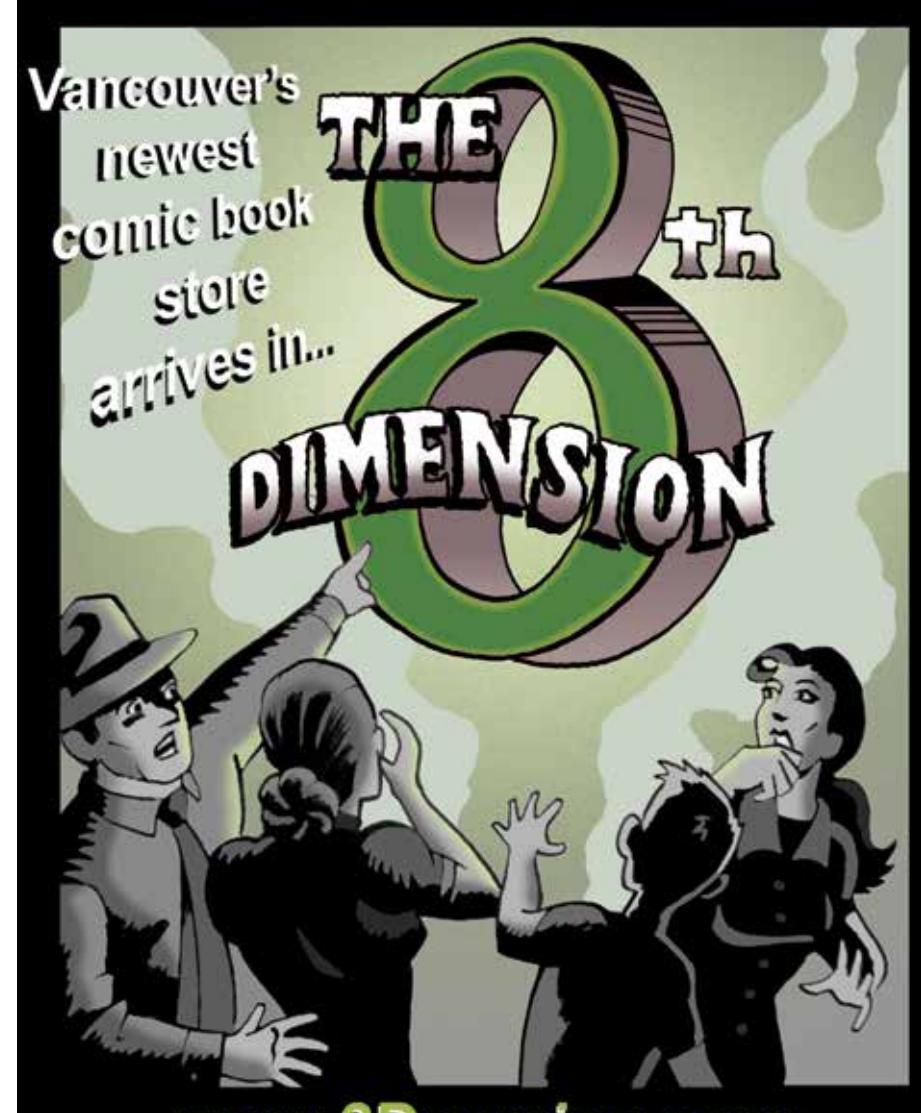
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8th Dimension Interview by Ira Hunter

BUSINESS PROFILE

Absolute Underground: Who are we talking with today?

Nick Parashos: Nick Parashos from the 8th Dimension.

AU: What can you tell us about the comic book store you are planning to open?

NP: That it's a new shop with the experience and love for the comic book and pop culture medium.

AU: Who else is involved in this venture and what do they bring to the table?

NP: Kelly Everaert, with a vast knowledge in comic books, and as well an artist and comic book creator in his own right.

AU: What first got you into comic books?

NP: For me it was getting my first comics from a church bazaar and just learning to read a few years later, discovering comic stores and getting in with DC and Marvel universes... then a few more years brought me *The Dark Knight Returns*, *Watchmen* and a book by Comico created by Bill Willingham called *The Elementals*, which showed me that comics were more than kids stuff.

Kelly was exposed to comics from his parents who would bring him home Bugs Bunny and all sorts of Disney books, he later moved on to horror comics and fantasy books like *Conan* and *Swampthing*.

AU: What are some of your favourite comics?

NP: Currently there are so many on the shelf, *Paper Girls*, *Superman Rebirth* version, *Black Hammer*, *ISLAND* anthology from Image.

Kelly Everaert: *Conan*, *BPRD* series, *Harrow County*, *Black Hammer*.

AU: What types of products will you be carrying?



NP: Whatever we can get our hands on that we like, along with our customers giving us input.

AU: This location has a history of comic bookiness already I understand?

NP: True Rx once stood on this very spot, it ran a fantastic 15 years. Kelly and I will draw on the experience and knowledge we gained at our time there.

AU: What are your thoughts on the current state of comics in pop culture, with so many show and movies being produced?

NP: The current state is an amazing time, so many things have come out of the comic book vein and splintered off, cosplay for one, toy and statue collecting...

AU: I know you are currently doing some extensive renovations. When do you plan to open the doors to the 8th Dimension?

NP: We've had delays, it's been a journey. We can say we will soft open in mid April, and announce the grand opening later.

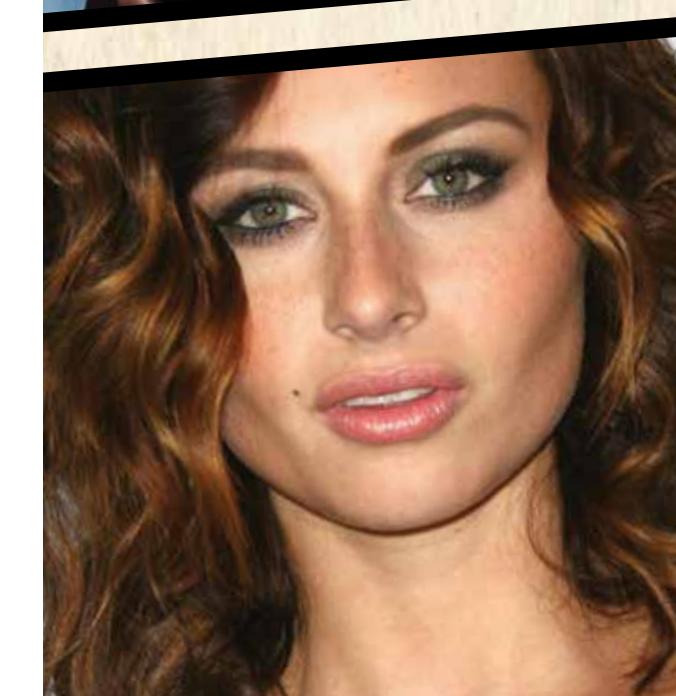
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